THE ECONOMIC FUNCTIONS OF RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS IN EASTERN INDIA FROM C. 550-1200 A.D.

by

Patti Vidanelage Bandula Karunatilaka

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ABSTRACT

The present study is a survey of the economic functions carried out by the religious institutions in eastern India from c. 550 to 1200 A.D. In the introduction the importance of the study of the economic functions of religious institutions is briefly discussed and the works written so far on the subject are mentioned. An examination of the sources is also included in the introduction. A survey of the main political developments in eastern India during the period is made in the first chapter, as a background for this study. The second chapter begins with a discussion on the development of the practice of making endowments for religious purposes, and it then examines the nature of endowments and the method by which the religious foundations in eastern India accumulated wealth. The third chapter deals with the landed property, with special reference to land tenure, rights of the religious institutions and land revenue and taxation. In the fourth chapter, the nature of monetary endowments, obligations of the depository, investment and rates of interest are discussed in detail. In the fifth chapter, the administrative organization of the religious institutions is examined, paying special attention to the management of property. The role of the religious institutions as economic organizations, and their relationship with society is evaluated in the sixth chapter.

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CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS

Arch. Surv. Ind. Rep.	Archaeologocial Survey of India Report
Arthaśāstra	Arthaśāstra of Kauṭilya
C.I.I.	Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum
Gautama	Gautama Dharmasūtra
Hindu Rev. Syst.	Contributions to the History of the Hindu Revenue System by U.N. Ghoshal
I.H.Q.	Indian Historical Quarterly
Ind. Ant.	Indian Antiquary
Ind. Ep. Gloss.	Indian Epigraphical Glossary by D.C. Sircar
Ins. Beng.	Inscriptions of Bengal, III, by N.G. Majumdar
J.A.S.B.	Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal
Jour. Andhra Hist. Res. Soc.	Journal of the Andhra Historical Research Society
Jour. Bihar Res. Soc.	Journal of the Bihar Research Society
Jour. Bihar Or. Res. Soc.	Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society
Jour. Ind. Hist.	Journal of Indian History
J.R.A.S.	Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society
Landlordism and Tenancy	Landlordism and Tenancy in Ancient and Medioval India as revealed by Epigraphic Records, by D.C. Sircar
Life of Hiuen-Tsang	Life of Hiuen-Tsang by the Shaman Hwui-li, tr. by S. Beal
Manu.	Manusmṛti

M.A.S.B.	Memoirs of the Asiatic Society of Bengal
Or. Hist. Res. Jour.	Orissa Historical Research Journal
Pāṇini	Aṣthadhyāyī of Pāṇini
Records of Buddhist Religion	A Record of the Buddhist Religion as practised in India and the Malay Archipelago by I-tsing, tr. by J. Takakusu
S.B.E.	Sacred Books of the East
Si-Yu-Ki	Si-Yu-Ki, Buddhist Records of the Western World: Chinese Accounts of India, tr. by S. Beal
Vāsiṣtha	Vāsiṣtha Dharmaśāstra
Viṣṇu	Viṣṇu Dharmasūtra

INTRODUCTION

Religious institutions in India, which were primarily centres of spiritual activity, gradually developed into strong economic units controlling various resources of production. Although this development was discernible in western India as early as the beginning of the Christian era, it became more pronounced throughout the subcontinent from the sixth century onwards. Hence, the study of the economic functions of religious institutions which were among the major institutions through which the general economy had been organized, is essential for a proper understanding of the economic history of the early medieval period, i.e., from the end of the Guptas to c. A.D. 1200.

Moreover, from the very beginning many religious foundations had functioned as corporate bodies, and this feature, though undergoing modification from time to time, remained the basis of their organization.[1] Therefore, the study of the economic functions of the religious institutions may also reveal how a corporate body which was not primarily designed for secular affairs evolved into one of the major economic institutions, while preserving its fundamental character and serving its original ideals.

Many scholars who wrote on the economic history of early medieval India have, from time to time, called

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1. Cf. R.C. Majumdar, Corporate Life in Ancient India, third edition, 1969, pp. 271 ff.

attention to the role of the religious institution in the economy of the period. Yet, most of the studies done so far on the subject are limited to the South Indian Hindu temple. Very little attention has been paid to the economic activities of the North Indian religious foundations, though their importance is often emphasized in other contexts.[1]

Against this background it is important to note that Pushpa Niyogi has devoted a short chapter of her Contributions to the Economic History of Northern India from the tenth to the twelfth century A.D., published in 1962, to the discussion of the economic importance of the Hindu temple in northern India. In that chapter, however, very little material relating to the subject has been utilized, and the discussion is mainly limited to the economic functions of the Hindu temples of western and central India. In a paper published in the Comparative Studies in Society and History, III, 1960-1961, André Bareau outlined the development of the practice of making endowments to the Buddhist Saṅgha in India. Yet, Bareau hardly used any inscriptions, except those of the Kṣaharāta Kṣatrapa - Sātavāhan period, which provide valuable information on the subject. In a short article entitled 'Endowments in favour of early Buddhist Monasteries in

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1. Cf. L. Gopal, The Economic Life of Northern India, 1965, p. 16. R.S. Sharma, Light on early Indian Economy and Society, 1966, pp. 79 ff. R.S. Sharma, Indian Feudalism, 1965, pp. 126 ff. D.D. Kosambi, The Culture and Civilization of Ancient India in Historical Outline, 1972, pp. 179 ff.

Bihar and Bengal', which appeared in the Journal of Ancient Indian History, VI, 1972-1973, Pushpa Niyogi has briefly dealt with the nature of endowments made to Buddhist monasteries in Bihar and Bengal from the fifth to the twelfth century A.D. However, Niyogi has based her discussion mainly on the accounts of the three Chinese monks, Fa-hsien, Hiuen-Tsang and I-tsing, and much of the inscriptional evidence has not been used. Even the records of the Chinese travellers have not been fully utilized.

Apart from these contributions, Jacques Garnet has included a brief discussion on the development of the practice of making endowments to the Buddhist Saṅgha in India, as a prelude to his study on the economic aspects of Buddhism in China, which is entitled Les aspects économiques du Bouddhisme dans la société chinoise du Ve au Xe siècle, and published in 1956. R.A.L.H. Gunawardhana in his Ph.D. thesis submitted to the University of London in 1965, entitled The History of the Buddhist Saṅgha in Ceylon, in which he made an exhaustive study of the economic life of the Buddhist Saṅgha in Sri Lanka, compared certain aspects of the economic functions of the Buddhist monasteries in Sri Lanka with those of the contemporary North Indian Buddhist monasteries.

In the present study an attempt is made to examine the economic functions carried out by the religious institutions in eastern India from c. 550 to 1200 A.D. The term eastern India is used here to denote the area presently consisting of the states of Bihar, West Bengal and Orissa in India and Bangladesh. Further, it is

necessary to point out that the term 'religious institutions' is also used in a limited sense; for we are not dealing with the establishments of all denominations. Although there is some evidence for the existence of Jaina religious foundations in eastern India, hardly any evidence is available for the study of their economic functions. Hence, we have limited our study to the Buddhist and Hindu religious institutions. Even though there were differences in ideology and organization between Buddhism and Hinduism, and, within both, between their different schools and sects, there was considerable similarity in the way in which the economic functions of the establishments of these main religions were carried out and also in their degree of involvement. Therefore on many aspects, there is no difficulty in including both kinds of religious establishment in our discussions.

It is only from the end of the Gupta period that there is clear evidence for the making of endowments to religious foundations in eastern India, which paved the way for the development of these institutions into major economic organizations. The beginning of the Muslim rule is generally taken as a turning point in Indian history. As far as this study is concerned, the establishment of Muslim power in Bihar and Bengal is of particular importance. In the first place, under the Muslims the indigenous religious establishments lost the royal patronage they had enjoyed for centuries. In addition, the political turmoil created by Muslim invasions must have disrupted the general economic organization in which

the religious foundations played an important role. Above all, many of the major religious foundations in the area were plundered and sometimes completely destroyed by the invaders.

Inscriptions constitute the main source for our study, and the majority of the inscriptions of the period are in the form of royal charters. This type of grant was often engraved on copper plates, but a few written on stone have also been found. The royal charters were not only the king's announcement of the endowment but also were official orders decreed upon government officers and the villagers concerned. Though the contents of the royal land grants of our period show considerable variety, the general pattern of the charters was almost identical. Some grants begin with the geneology of the ruler and then enumerate the details of the grant. The record is concluded with some imprecatory verses and the mention of the name of the scribe and the engraver. The section giving the details of the grant contains valuable information for the study of the land system, taxation as well as the privileges and the immunities transferred to the donee. Moreover, it provides details concerning the types of land, nature of cultivation and sometimes the exact area of land donated. Although the land grants that are not in the form of royal charters do not follow the above pattern, they, too, often provide details of the types of land, boundaries, cultivation, etc.

Almost all the donatory inscriptions contain

details pertaining to the nature of the endowment and the donee. Sometimes they mention the purpose for which the benefaction was made. These details furnish valuable information for studying the extent of property held by the religious establishments and their involvement in economic activities. Besides, they help determine the types of property donated, the nature of rights transferred and also the nature of the patronage which the institutions received. The inscriptions have the unique importance of being contemporary sources. Moreover, in many cases, they can definitely be dated and located. Hence, their information can be used to study conditions in a number of regions at different times.

Apart from the donatory inscriptions, we have used a large number of inscriptions on seals and sealings found at the site of the Great Monastery of Nālandā. Though seals were used by many religious institutions for administrative purposes, only Nālandā has yielded a large number of seals and sealings containing valuable information. Most of the legends on the Nālandā seals and sealings have been deciphered and translated; yet, some of them need more careful reading and reinterpretation. The value of the information which can be gathered from the seals depends largely upon the interpretation of certain terms used in the legends. We have suggested new readings and new interpretations wherever this seemed appropriate. Their information can be used mainly for the study of the administrative organization of the Nālandā mahāvihāra and also of its relations with the

regional monasteries and various outside bodies. The unique importance of the seals and sealings lies in the valuable light they throw on certain aspects of the internal administration of the institution and also the way in which it exercised its authority over the villages under its control, aspects which are not brought to light by other sources.

Among the literary works we have used for the present study, the most important information comes from the records of the Chinese travellers. The Chinese monk Hiuen-Tsang who travelled in India in the first half of the seventh century A.D. has recorded his experiences and impressions of various institutions and individuals. I-tsing who went to India a few decades after Hiuen-Tsang, has also recorded an account of his visit. Although Hiuen-Tsang visited many places in both north and south India, I-tsing's associations were limited to eastern India. Both of them spent much of their time studying and copying Buddhist scriptures, and they have left valuable memoirs on several Buddhist monasteries in eastern India. However, their information is largely limited to the functions and organization of larger monasteries such as Nālandā, and therefore very little is revealed about the management of affairs of other monasteries. Yet, theirs is the only available information on certain aspects of economic functions of Buddhist monasteries. In this respect I-tsing's records contain more details than the accounts of Hiuen-Tsang. I-tsing presents a full discussion of various problems arising from disciplinary

matters within the Saṁgha and also explains the organization and the functions of the monasteries. In these discussions he often refers to various aspects of monastic administration, management of monastic property and the attitude of the monks towards wealth. He often attempts to put his observations in the perspective of the Buddhist Vinaya, hence, in many cases he seeks to compare theory and practice.

Although the accounts of Fa-hsien, another Chinese monk who visited India in the first quarter of the fifth century A.D., do not come within the period under review, we have used them for the purpose of comparison and for obtaining complementary information. The Tibetan monk Dharmasvāmin who visited eastern India in the second quarter of the thirteenth century A.D., referred to various Buddhist monasteries in the area. His account, though belonging to a slightly later period, gives some indication of the condition of certain major Buddhist institutions in eastern India during the political confusion immediately after the establishment of Muslim rule in Bihar and Bengal.

Apart from those accounts, we have used several Muslim records among which special mention may be made of the Ṭabaqāt-i-Nāsirī of Minhāj-ud-dīn and Al-Bīrūni's India. The Ṭabaqāt-i-Nāsirī refers to various Indian religious establishments, their hoarded wealth in particular. Though Al-Bīrūni did not visit eastern India, his account was written in c. 1030 A.D. He was a very keen observer of the contemporary Indian institutions and society. We have used his account for the purpose of

comparison in general discussions.

The indigenous literary works have very little direct relevance to the present study. However, for the clarification of certain points and also for supplementary evidence we have consulted some of them. Of these, Medhātithi's commentary on the Manusmṛti, which belongs to the period under consideration, is of particular importance for the explanation of certain revenue terms and expressions relating to the land system. The Agni Purāṇa, which is generally believed to have been written in eastern India and has been ascribed to the period under review, contains some incidental references to property and functions of religious institutions. The Rājataraṅgiṇī of Kalhaṇa, though written in Kashmir, provides valuable information pertaining to the organization and functions of Hindu temples, and this information is useful for comparison. We have also consulted various lexicons of the period for the explanation of various terms mentioned in the inscriptions. These include the Vaijayantī of Yādavaprakāśa, Deśīnāmamālā of Hemacandra, Abhidhānacintāmaṇi of Hemacandra, Abhidhānaratnamālā of Halāyudha and the Nāmaliṅgānuśāsanā or Amarakoṣa of Amarasiṁha.

Of all these sources, the inscriptions, though remaining the most important source for our study, are necessarily limited in number for the period of about 650 years. In addition, they are not evenly spread over the region under consideration. Thus, Orissa has yielded the largest number of inscriptions whereas only

a few have come to light from West Bengal. Hence, it becomes extremely difficult to study the various stages of development of certain aspects of the economic functions of religious foundations. Moreover, the value of inscriptions as a source for a study of this type largely depends upon the possibility of explaining various terms and expressions mentioned in them. In many cases, for the explanation of these terms, one has to rely mainly on etymology though this is not always a satisfactory method. On the other hand, certain terms, though clear by themselves, do not enlighten us on their specific relevance to the subject. Therefore one has, for the interpretation of such terms, to consider evidence from other regions. Yet again, the accuracy of any interpretation based on evidence from other regions may be questionable on the ground of possible regional variations.

As regards the accounts of the Chinese travellers, their evidence is entirely limited to the affairs and organization of the Buddhist institutions. Even that information is based largely on the larger monasteries where the travellers spent most of their time. Besides, the travellers were not interested in recording any possible differences in the conditions and organization of the establishments belonging to various Buddhist schools. Above all, their main concern was to record the condition of Buddhism in India and to study how the Buddhist Vinaya was practised by the Indian monks, and therefore, any information on the economic functions of the Buddhist monasteries are found only in incidental references. Owing to these limitations it is inevitable that many questions have remained unanswered.

CHAPTER I

THE POLITICAL BACKGROUND

The mighty Gupta empire that once controlled the major part of northern India and some parts of the Deccan showed clear signs of disintegration after Budha Gupta whose reign ended circa 494/5 A.D. Although most of western India was breaking away from Gupta control during the period of political turmoil that followed Budha Gupta's death, it seems that Bihar and Bengal still remained under Gupta authority.[1] The available information on the history of this period is so confused that it is extremely difficult to form a clear picture of the political conditions in eastern India.

From the seals of later rulers of the Gupta kingdom we get the following geneology: mahārājādhirāja Purugupta, a son of Kumāra Gupta, his son mahārājādhirāja Narasiṁha Gupta, his son mahārājadhirāja Kumāra Gupta and his son mahārājādhirāja Viṣṇu Gupta.[2] However, it appears that there were at least two other rulers named Bhānu Gupta and Vainya Gupta, who were ruling in the first quarter of the sixth century, respectively in Malwa and south-east Bengal. Although it is not known wnether Bhānu Gupta was an independent ruler, there is little doubt about Vainya Gupta's sovereign

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1. S.R. Goyal, A History of the Imperial Guptas, Allahabad, 1967, pp. 370 ff.

2. K.K. Thaplyal, Studies in Ancient Indian Seals, Lucknow, 1972, pp. 68-69 and E.I. XXVI, 1941-1942, p. 239.

position. Nothing definite is known about their relationship with the family of Gupta rulers represented by the line from Puru Gupta to Viṣṇu Gupta. The last known king of the Imperial Gupta dynasty was Viṣṇu Gutpa who probably issued the Damodarpur Copper Plate dated in the Gupta year 224 (543/4 A.D.).[1] It is not known when his rule ended. A land grant[2] found in the Gaya region, the centre of Gupta power, was issued in 551/2 A.D., by a certain kumārāmātya Nandana; and as there is no mention of his overlord, it seems that the Guptas no longer exercised effective control over that area. Moreover, more conclusive evidence is available for the disappearance of Gupta power from the adjoining region. The Haraha Inscription of Īśānavarman clearly proves that the Maukharis had become independent in modern Uttar Pradesh by 554/5 A.D.

Apart from the above mentioned record of kumārāmātya Nandana, three inscriptions from the Nagarjuni Hills in the Gaya district, refer to a Maukhari king named Anantavarman.[3] These records give no indication that Anantavarman was a sovereign ruler nor do they indicate that he was subordinate to any paramount ruler; they simply describe his grandfather Yajñavarman as a local ruler. On palaeographical considerations these inscriptions have been assigned to the sixth century,[4]

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1. E.I. XV, 1919-1920, p. 142, l. 1.
2. Ibid., X, 1909-1910, pp. 49 ff., l. 8.
3. C.I.I. III, pp. 224-225 and p. 227.
4. Classical Age, 1954, p. 67.

and therefore it may be presumed that Yajñavarman and probably his son Śārdūlavarman were local rulers paying homage to the Guptas. R.C. Majumdar[1] believes that Anantavarman's records do not refer to his paramount ruler, because he was ruling at the time of the collapse of the Gupta power. However, it is not possible to determine the true political status of these rulers for want of more information. As there are no other records of this family the fate of Anantavarman or his possible successors remains unknown.

The main line of the Maukhari dynasty, which had no apparent connexion with the above mentioned family, has left several inscriptions in present Uttar Pradesh. Along with this Maukhari family, we have evidence for the rise of the Later Guptas, and the intermittent conflict between these two dynasties was an important aspect of the political situation in most parts of eastern India. Īśānavarman was the first Maukhari king to assume the title of mahārājādhirāja and to issue coins. This indicates that he was the first sovereign king of this dynasty.[2] The Haraha Inscription[3] of Īśānavarman, issued in the year 611, probably of the Vikrama saṁvat (554 A.D.), gives him the title of mahārājadhirāja and

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1. Classical Age, 1954, pp. 67-68.

2. Kanauj may have been the capital of the Maukharis at least after the time of Īśānavarman. From the Harṣa Carita it is apparent that Grahavarman, the brother-in-law of Harṣa, was ruling from Kanauj. For a discussion see D. Devahuti, Harsha A Political Study, Oxford, 1970, pp. 24 ff.

3. E.I. XIV, 1917-1918, p. 118, v. 21.

describes him as a hero who defeated the Gauḍas, the Āndhras and the Śulikas.[1] Therefore, by the middle of the sixth century A.D., Īśānavarman was ruling as an independent monarch, and his rise to power almost coincided with the final collapse of the Gupta empire.[2]

The Later Guptas, too, emerged as independent rulers at about the same time as the Maukharis. Although this dynasty is called the later Guptas in contrast to the Imperial Guptas, there is no positive evidence, except the similarity in their name-endings, to suggest a connexion between the two dynasties. According to the Aphsad Inscription[3] (Gaya district, Bihar) of Ādityasena, there were seven rulers in the Later Gupta dynasty before him. No eloquent royal title is given to any of the early members of the family, but Kṛṣṇa Gupta, first in the list, is called nṛpa (king), a very modest title that does not indicate any sovereignty. Kṛṣṇa Gupta was followed by his son Harṣa Gupta, who in turn was succeeded by his son Jīvita Gupta I.

Kumāra Gupta, the successor of Jīvita Gupta I according to the Aphsad Inscription,[4] defeated Īśānavarman,

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1. The Gauḍas may be taken to mean the people of north Bengal and the Āndhras were probably a kingdom in the north eastern Deccan. The identification of the Śulikas is a matter of dispute; for a discussion see, E.I. XXVIII, 1949-1950, pp. 109 ff.

2. S.R. Goyal, op.cit., pp. 382-384.

3. C.I.I. III, p. 203, ll. 5-6.

4. Ibid., l. 7.

who is generally identified as the Maukhari ruler of that name mentioned in the Haraha Inscription.[1] On the basis of this identification it is possible to suggest that, like Īśānavarman, Kumāra Gupta was the first independent king of his dynasty, a position he must have attained circa 550 A.D. Thus it may be assumed that the battle between Kumāra Gupta and Īśānavarman, in which the latter was defeated, actually led to the consolidation of the authority of the two dynasties in different parts of northern India.

Kumāra Gupta was succeeded by his son Dāmodara Gupta, who is also said to have vanquished the Maukharis,[2] but it is not certain whether Īśānavarman or his successor was thus defeated. Dāmodara Gupta was probably killed or injured in battle, and his son Mahāsena Gupta acceded to the throne. The Deo-Baranark Inscription[3] of Jīvita Gupta II mentions that the king redonated some land that had previous been donated by Śarvavarman and Avantivarman. Several scholars[4] have been inclined to identify these two as the two Maukhari kings who succeeded Īśānavarman. If this is accepted it appears that, though the Maukharis were defeated by Kumāra Gupta, they were able to hold on at least to some parts of Bihar during the reigns of Śarvavarman and Avantivarman.

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1. D. Devahuti, op.cit., p. 15.
2. C.I.I. III, p. 203, l. 7.
3. Ibid., p. 216, ll. 6-12.
4. B.P. Sinha, The Decline of the Kingdom of Magadha, 1954, pp. 199-200. D. Devahuti, op.cit., pp. 16-17.

The Aphsad Inscription[1] informs us that Mahāsena Gupta defeated Suṣṭhitavarman, the king of Kāmarūpa. Mahāsena Gupta's career can be placed towards the end of the sixth century A.D., as Suṣṭhitavarman was the father of Bhāskaravarman, a contemporary of Harṣavardhana (c. 606-647 A.D.). It appears that by this time the Later Guptas had firmly established themselves in the Bihar-Bengal region.[2] The Harṣacarita describes Mahāsena Gupta as king of Mālava, whose sons Mādhava and Kumāra sought refuge with Prabhākaravardhana the king of Sthāṇvīśvara. It is generally considered that Mahāsena Gupta mentioned by Bāṇa, was identical with his namesake mentioned in the Aphsad Inscription as the father of the Later Gupta king Mādhava Gupta. The Aphsad Inscription makes no mention of the exact location of the original kingdom of the early rulers of the Later Gupta dynasty, though it is fairly certain that from the time of Ādityasena, Magadha was their centre. As Ādityasena and his successors were ruling from Magadha, some scholars have suggested that the early kings, too, ruled in the same region.[3] Yet the clear mention in the Harṣacarita,[4] which is almost a contemporary source, that Mahāsena Gupta was king of Mālava, runs counter to this assumption. Those who believed that Magadha was the

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1. C.I.I. III, p. 203, l. 10.
2. Classical Age, 1954, p. 73. R.G. Basak, History of North-Eastern India, 1934, p. 219.
3. B.P. Sinha, op.cit., p. 177.
4. Harṣacarita (tr.), p. 119.

original kingdom of the Later Gutpas, have interpreted the statement in the Harṣacarita as implying that Mahāsena Gupta had, in the latter part of his reign, lost control of Magadha.[1]

Though we know nothing about the fate of Mahāsena Gupta, we learn from the Harṣacarita[2] that his two sons Mādhava Gupta and Kumāra Gupta took shelter at the court of Prabhākaravardhana. This incident must have taken place before the death of Prabhākaravardhana in about 601 A.D. Although Mahāsena Gupta's career ended around the close of the sixth century, it appears that, soon afterwards, one Deva Gupta became the ruler of Mālava.[3]

While the Later Guptas and the Maukharis were emerging as independent dynasties after the disintegration of the Gupta empire, another independent kingdom appears to have arisen in the areas roughly corresponding to eastern and southern Bengal. Several copper-plate inscriptions found in the Faridpur and Burdwan districts of Bengal refer to three rulers named Dharmāditya, Gopacandra and Samācāradeva. These inscriptions[4] as well as some of the coins issued by them indicate that

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1. D. Devahuti, op.cit., pp. 20-21.
2. Harṣacarita (tr.),, pp. 119-120.
3. Ibid., p. 187 and Devahuti, op.cit., pp. 63-64.
4. Two Faridpur Grants edited by F.E. Pargiter, Ind.Ant. XXXIX, 1910, pp. 193-216; Kotwalipara Grant of Samācāradeva, edited by F.E. Pargiter, J.A.S.B. VII, 1911, pp. 476 ff.; Mallasarul Copper Plate, D.C. Sircar, Select Inscriptions, 1942, pp. 350-364.

they were independent kings bearing the title of mahārājādhirāja; and Gopacanadra at least reigned for eighteen years and Samācāradeva for a minimum of fourteen years. However, none of the copper plates contain any direct evidence for a definite chronology for the three kings, but F.E. Pargiter[1] who edited the inscriptions, regarded Dharmāditya's records as earlier than those of Gopacandra on palaeographical considerations. Yet, R.C. Majumdar rejected Pargiter's assumption stating that palaeography does not offer a safe basis for chronology within a short period of time.

In this connexion, Majumdar draws attention to the Gunaighar Copper Plate[2] of Vainya Gupta (507 A.D.), according to which a certain Vijayasena was a local ruler under Vainya Gupta. He then identifies this Vijayasena with another Vijayasena mentioned in the Mallasarul Copper Plate,[3] and on this basis suggests that, when Vainya Gupta's rule was over that region came under Gopacandra, and accordingly, Vijayasena changed his allegiance. However, apart from the identification of the two Vijayasenas as the same person there is no other evidence to suggest that Gopacandra succeeded Vainya Gupta.

Though it is generally believed that Samācāradeva was the last of the three kings,[4] again there is no definite evidence for such an assumption. Apart from these

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1. Ind.Ant. XXXIX, 1910, pp. 206 ff.
2. S.K. Maity and R.R. Mukherji, Corpus of Bengal Inscriptions, 1967, pp. 65-70, ll. 15 ff.
3. D.C. Sircar, Select Inscriptions, 1942, pp. 350-364, l. 13.
4. R.C. Majumdar, History of Bengal, I, 1943, pp. 52-53.

three kings who had the title mahārājādhirāja, some gold coins found in eastern Bengal mention two other names of rulers. These coins are debased imitations of the Imperial Gupta coins, and have therefore been assigned to the latter half of the sixth century A.D. On only two coins can the names of the kings be deciphered. They are Pṛthivī(ra) and Sudhanyāditya.[1] Apart from the fact that they ruled in the latter half of the sixth century, nothing else can be said about them. Therefore it may be stated that since the collapse of the Gupta empire there were at least three powerful kings in eastern and southern Bengal, whose order of succession cannot be definitely established. Probably there were several other independent rulers as well, before the rise of Śaśāṅka at the end of the sixth century A.D.

From the Harṣacarita [2] we learn that in the political struggle that took place between the Maukhari king Grahavarman and the 'Mālava' king Deva Gupta, Śaśāṅka of Gauḍa was an ally of the 'Mālava' king. The Harṣa Carita portrays him as a powerful king who defeated and killed Rājyavardhana, the brother of Harṣa, who came to the rescue of the Maukharis. Despite this information the early history of Śaśāṅka is obscure. A seal matrix[3] cut in a rock of the fort of Rohtasgarh mentions the name of śrī mahāsāmanta Śaśāṅka. It is generally believed

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1. A.S. Altekar, The Coinage of the Gupta Empire, 1957, pp. 333-337.
2. Harsacarita (tr.), p. 187.
3. C.I.I. III, pp. 283-284, pl. XLIII, b.

that this mahāsāmanta Śaśāṅka is identical with the king of Gauḍa of the same name mentioned in the Harṣacarita.[1] It is not known under whose suzereinty Śaśāṅka began his career. Several scholars[2] have attempted to establish that he was a subordinate ruler of the Maukhari king Grahavarman, but this theory is solely based on the mere assumption that Gauḍa and Magadha were under the Maukharis. Though it is probable that during the days of Śarvavarman and Avantivarman Magadha was under Maukhari dominance,[3] there is no positive evidence to suggest the same for Gauḍa or north Bengal. Even if these regions were under the Maukharis for some time, they must have passed to the Later Gupta king Mahāsena Gupta. Therefore it is more probable that Śaśāṅka was first a subordinate ruler of Mahāsena Gupta or some other king in Bengal before achieving independence.[4]

Although we do not know the exact date of Śaśāṅka's accession, it is certain that he was a powerful ruler who killed Rājyavardhana in 606 A.D., so that his rise to power may be placed at the end of the sixth or the beginning of the seventh century A.D. According to Hiuen-Tsang[5] Śaśāṅka cut down the Bodhi tree and attempted to remove an image of the Buddha at Budhagayā. This

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1. Cf. K.K. Thaplyal, Studies in Ancient Indian Seals, 1972, pp. 79-80.

2. R.C. Majumdar, History of Bengal, I, 1943, p. 59, f.n. 2.

3. See supra, p. 21

4. For different theories on Śaśāṅka's origin, cf. K.K. Thaplyal, op.cit., pp. 79-80.

5. Watters, On Yuan Chwang's Travels, II, p. 115.

suggests that his dominion extended over Magadha in addition to Karṇasuvarṇa. From the Ganjam Plates[1] of Mādhavarāja II, dated in the Gupta year 300 (619-620 A.D.) it is clear that Śaśāṅka was recognized as the suzerain of the Śailodbhava king Mādhavarāja II in Kongoda. It is evident from the two Midnapur Plates of Śaśāṅka that he was also the lord of the Daṇḍabhukti and Utkala regions. From this discussion it is quite clear that by the early years of the seventh century, a large part of eastern India was under Śaśāṅka's control. One can deduce that the growing power of Śaśāṅka posed a serious threat to the Maukhari kingdom. Perhaps it was this threat together with the power of Deva Gupta that led the Maukharis to enter into a matrimonial alliance with the Puṣyabhūti family. Meanwhile, Deva Gupta made a counter alliance with Śaśāṅka against the Maukharis.[2]

From the Harṣacarita [3] we learn that Grahavarman, the king of Kanauj, was killed and his wife Rājyaśrī imprisoned by the 'lord of Mālava' (Deva Gupta). By this time Prabhākaravardhana had died and Rājyavardhana, his elder son, assuming the responsibilities of kingship, marched against the king of Mālava, and defeated him in battle. Then he proceeded towards Kanauj where, in the meantime, Śaśāṅka, who had come to the help of Deva Gupta, had encamped. Rājyavardhana was killed in the battle

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1. See infra, p.30

2. D. Devahuti, op.cit., pp. 67-68.

3. Harṣacarita (English tr.), pp. 173-175.

that followed. Consequently, his brother Harṣavardhana became the ruler of Sthāṇvīśvara and soon established himself in Kanauj as well. Then he made huge preparations for war against Śaśāṅka, but we have no information of any battle that would have taken place between them.[1] The fact that Harṣa established himself as the ruler of Kanauj early in his career makes it clear that Śaśāṅka was no longer present there.

According to Hiuen-Tsang,[2] by 637/38 A.D., Magadha was under a certain Pūrṇavarman, who probably ruled as a subordinate of Harṣa. If Magadha had been under Śaśāṅka, this indicates that he lost it to Pūrṇavarman, or more probably, to Harṣa. From the Doobi Copper Plates[3] of Bhāskaravarman, we learn that the Gauḍa forces suffered a defeat at the hands of the Kāmarūpa ruler. And the Nidhanpur Plate[4] clearly states that Bhāskaravarman was in control of Karṇasuvarṇa, formerly Śaśāṅka's capital. On the strength of the accounts of Hiuen-Tsang, it is generally believed that, towards the close of his reign, Harṣa carried his conquests as far as Utkala and Kongoda in Orissa.[5] However, it is not certain whether these expeditions met with much success, for we know for certain that the Śailodbhavas

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1. D. Devahuti, op.cit., pp. 70-80.
2. Watters, On Yuan Chwang's Travels, II, p. 115.
3. Jour. Assam Res. Soc. XI, 1944, pp. 33 ff.
4. E.I. XIX, 1927-1928, p. 117.
5. Life of Hiuen-Tsang, pp. 159 ff.; cf. Devahuti, op.cit., pp. 97-98.

became independent after Śaśāṅka's death and continued to rule for a long time; they do not seem to have accepted the suzerainty of Harṣa or any other ruler.[1] Whatever the successes of Harṣa and Bhāskaravarman, it is more probable that they had to wait until the death of Śaśāṅka to conquer at least some areas under the latter's control.

Nothing definite is known about the political conditions of Orissa in the Gupta period or during the few decades that followed the disintegration of the Gupta empire. Though there is no positive evidence to conclude that Orissa was under the Guptas, it is difficult to believe that Samudra Gupta would have led his expeditions as far south as the Pallava kingdom without having some control over Orissa. However, we learn from the Sumandala Plates[2] that a king named Pṛthivīvigraha was reigning in Tosalī (northern Kaliṅga and Utkala) in the Gupta year 250 (569/70 A.D.). A copper plate[3] found at Kanas, Puri district, Orissa, refers to a king named Lokavigraha who was ruling in Tosalī in the year 280 of the Gupta era (599/600 A.D.). It is very probable that Lokavigraha was a successor of Pṛthivīvigraha, or a later member of the same dynasty.

Though the inscription of Lokavigraha refers to him as the ruler of Tosalī, the villages granted in the

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1. See infra, p. 61-62

2. E.I. XXVIII, 1949-1950, pp. 84-85, ll. 2-4.

3. Ibid., pp. 331, ll. 2-4.

record were actually situated in southern Tosalī. And the simultaneous rise of another dynasty in northern Tosalī seems to nullify the claim that they were the rulers of the whole of Tosalī. The Soro Plates,[1] dated in the year 260, mentions that a ruler named Śambhūyaśas of the Māna family was reigning in Uttara Tosāli. From the Patiakella Grant,[2] dated year 283, it is evident that southern Tosalī, too, was under Śambhūyaśas. It is believed that these records are dated in the Gupta era, so that the dates correspond to 579/80 A.D. and 602 A.D. respectively. Thus it appears that Lokavigraha's rule came to an end in or before 602 A.D. As we saw earlier, Śaśāṅka was also expanding his authority towards Orissa by this time, and it is probable that he conquered the areas up to Kongoda, before he left for Kanauj in 606 A.D. Therefore it is probable that, though Śambhūyaśas was able to annex southern Tosalī c. 602 A.D., he soon lost his kingdom to Śaśāṅka.

From the Ganjam Plates of Mādhavarāja,[3] dated in the Gupta year 300 (619/20 A.D.), we learn of another ruling family in Kongoda in southern Orissa. The inscription mentions three members of a family called Śailodbhava. The first two members of the dynasty are given the title of mahārāja, and the third, Mādhavarāja II, who issued the present record, is also given the same title.

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1. E.I., XXIII, 1935-1936, p. 201, ll. 6.
2. Ibid., IX, 1907-1908, pp. 285-288, ll. 3-5.
3. Ibid., VI, 1900-1901, pp. 143-146, ll. 3 ff.

It is clear from the inscription that Mādhavarāja II was a sāmanta or a local ruler of Śaśāṅka in 619/20 A.D.

Bihar and Bengal Since the End of Śaśāṅka's Reign

The death of Śaśāṅka was followed by a period of political confusion. The Śailodbhavas became independent and, though Harṣa perhaps made an attempt to conquer Kongoda, he does not seem to have been successful.[1] Hiuen-Tsang,[2] who travelled in Bengal c. 638 A.D., shortly after the death of Śaśāṅka, refers to four kingdoms in that region, namely, Karṇasuvarṇa, Samataṭa, Tāmraliptī and Puṇḍravardhana. At least some of these areas were once included in Śaśāṅka's dominion.

As is evident from the Nidhanpur Plate, at least Karṇasuvarṇa, the capital of Śaśāṅka, came under Bhāskaravarman of Kāmarūpa.[3] Yet, from the Vappaghosavata Grant[4] we come to know of another ruler named Jayanāga, who ruled from Karṇasuvarṇa. The date of Jayanāga has aroused controversy, while some scholars are inclined to place him before Śaśāṅka, others believe that he succeeded him.[5] We have little information of the political

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1. See infra, p. 62

2. Watters, On Yuan Chwang's Travels, II, pp. 184-193 and Si-yu-ki, II, pp. 194-204.

3. See supra, p. 28

4. E.I. XVIII, 1925-1926, p. 68, ll.1-2.

5. For different theories and discussions, see B.P. Sinha, Decline of the Kingdom of Magadha, 1954, pp. 223 ff. and D. Devahuti, op.cit., pp. 33 ff.

conditions of much of . . Bengal for nearly a century from the death of Śaśāṅka, or to be more precise, from Jayanāga.

The death of Harṣavardhana also appears to have been followed by a period of political turmoil in northern India.[1] As seen above, Pūrṇavarman, most probably a subordinate of Harṣa, became ruler of Magadha, but we have no other information of his political activities. From the Aphsad Inscription we learn that Mādhava Gupta was the ruler of Magadha before Ādityasena. It is generally believed that this Mādhava Gupta was one of the two sons of Mahāsena Gupta, who sought shelter at the court of Sthāṇvīśvara. So, it appears that, probably after the death of Harṣa, Mādhava Gupta had the opportunity to become the ruler of Magadha.

Mādhava Gupta was succeeded by his son Ādityasena who assumed the title of mahārājādhirāja[2] which is indicative of his independent position. His inscriptions have been found in Shahpur, Aphsad and on the Mandar Hills in the Bhagalpur district of Bihar. From this it is evident that his kingdom covered at least southern Bihar. His shahpur Inscription[3] is dated in the year 66, and it has been suggested that the date refers to Harṣa era. Accordingly, the date corresponds with 672 A.D. Ādityasena was succeeded by his son Deva

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1. For a discussion on the political conditions of northern India immediately after Harṣa see The Classical Age, 1954, pp. 124 ff.

2. Aphsad Inscription, C.I.I. III, p. 204, l. 15.

3. Ibid., p. 210.

Gupta.[1] We have no more information of this ruler, who was followed by his son Viṣṇu Gupta.[2] An inscription from Mangraon,[3] Bihar, refers to the seventeenth year of a certain Viṣṇu Gupta, but it does not provide the geneology or any other information of the king. On palaeographical grounds this record has been assigned to the early eighth century A.D., and on this basis, the king mentioned there has been identified as Viṣṇu Gupta of the Later Gupta dynasty.[4]

Viṣṇu Gupta was succeeded by his son Jīvita Gupta II who issued the Deo-Baranark Inscription.[5] The only information we have of this king is that he was in control of the banks of Gomati river, an area once held by the Maukhari kings Śarvavarman and Anantavarman. Jīvita Gupta is the last known king who can definitely be connected with the Later Gupta dynasty; but a land grant from Katra, Muzaffarpur district of north Bihar, refers to a certain mahārājādhirāja Jīva Gupta, the son of a certain mahārājādhirāja Rāma Gupta.[6] The inscription has, on palaeographical considerations, been assigned to the first half of the eighth century, and therefore,

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1. Deo-Baranark Inscription, C.I.I. III, p. 215, l. 4.
2. Ibid., l. 5.
3. Mangraon Inscription of Viṣṇu Gupta, E.I. XXVI, 1941-1942, p. 246, ll. 1-2.
4. Ibid., p. 242.
5. Deo-Baranark Inscription, C.I.I. III, p. 216, l. 6.
6. Katra Grant of Jīva Gupta, edited by D.C. Sircar, E.I.XXXV, 1963-1964, p. 129, ll. 2-5.

D.C. Sircar[1] is inclined to take Rāma Gupta and Jīva Gupta as successors of Jīvita Gupta II.

Apart from these two kings we have no direct information of any other rulers in Bihar. However, from the Prakrit poem Gauḍa-vaho[2] of Vākpati, a court poet of Yaśovarman of Kanauj, we come to know that Yaśovarman led a successful military expedition to Bihar and Bengal and killed the king of Gauḍa. It is not known who was the ruler of Gauḍa killed in this military campaign that most probably took place in the second quarter of the eighth century.[3] The Nālandā Inscription of the time of Yaśovarman, which refers to him as the paramount ruler, points to Yaśovarman's control over Magadha. According to the Rājataraṅgiṇī,[4] Lalitāditya of Kashmir, a contemporary of Yaśovarman, defeated the latter, and also invaded Bengal.

Though we have some information about the political conditions of Magadha and in a few instances on Gauḍa, as well, very little is known about southern and eastern Bengal up to the rise of the Pālas and the Candras. Two Copper Plates from Ashrafpur[5] and a short image inscription[6] from Deulbadi near Comilla in Bangladesh,

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1. E.I. XXXV, 1963-1964, pp. 127-128.
2. Gauḍa-vaho, edited by S.P. Pandit, 1887, v. 1194.
3. The Classical Age, 1954, pp. 128-129.
4. Rājataraṅgiṇī IV, 132 ff.
5. M.A.S.B. I, no. 6, 1905, pp. 89-90 and pp. 90-91.
6. E.I. XVII, 1923-1924, p. 358.

reveal the names of three rulers named Khaḍyodgama, his son Jātakhaḍga and his son Devakhaḍga. The Ashrafpur Plate no. 2[1] mentions that king Devakhaḍga had a son named Rājarāja or Rājarājabhaṭṭa who was the crown-prince. These copper plates have been issued from Karmāntavāsaka, identified as Badkamant, twelve miles west of Comilla.[2] The reading of the date of the two Ashrafpur copper plates is a matter of dispute and therefore on palaeographical considerations they have been assigned to a period between sixth and eighth century A.D.[3] However, a passing reference made by I-tsing seems to throw light on this problem. He mentions that among many Chinese monks who arrived in India after Hiuen-Tsang, but before himself who arrived in 671 A.D., was one Sheng-Chi who arrived at Samataṭa. The king of that time was Rājarājabhaṭa who was a Buddhist.[4] This ruler has been identified by many scholars[5] with Rājarājabhaṭṭa, the son of Devakhaḍga. Though there is no corroborative evidence for this identification, this is the only plausible suggestion that can be made on the date of the Khaḍga dynasty.

Another ruling dynasty in eastern Bengal is

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1. M.A.S.B. I, no. 6, 1905, pp. 90-91, ll. 3 ff.
2. E.I. XVII, 1923-1924, p. 359.
3. R.G. Basak, History of North-Eastern India, 1934, p. 202 and N.K. Bhattasali, J.R.A.S. (NS), XIX, 1923, pp. 375-379.
4. Life of Hiuen-Tsang, introduction, pp. xxv ff.
5. R.G. Basak, op.cit., p. 207; R.C. Majumdar, in Classical Age, 1955, p. 143.

referred to in a copper plate found at Kailan, Tippera district of Bangladesh. This inscription contains the names of two rulers known as Śrīdhāraṇa Rāta and his father Jīvadhāraṇa, both of whom are styled 'lords of Samataṭa'.[1] D.C. Sircar[2] assigns the Kailan Copper Plate to the period between Śaśāṅka and Dharmapāla of the Pāla dynasty, and believes that the script of the record in many respects shows similarity with that of the Ashrafpur Plates of the Khaḍgas. Hence, it is possible that Jīvadhāraṇa and Śrdhāraṇa were contemporaries or near-contemporaries of the Khaḍgas.

From the above discussion it would appear that during the century that followed the death of Śaśāṅka there were hardly any periods when some degree of political stability prevailed in Magadha and Bengal. And there seem to have been constant struggles between various rulers, at least in Gauḍa, before the rise of the Pālas, for the Khalimpur Plate[3] of Dharmapāla mentions that Gopāla, the founder of the Pāla dynasty, came to power putting an end to the state of anarchy.

Gopāla, who laid the foundation of Pāla rule, appears to have begun his career in north Bengal, for the Rāmacarita[4] and the Kamauli Plates[5] of Vaidyadeva

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1. I.H.Q. XXIII, 1947, p. 238, ll. 14 ff.
2. Ibid., pp. 221-224.
3. E.I. IV, 1896-1897, pp. 248 ff.
4. Rāmacarita, Sanskrit text and the English translation by R.C. Majumdar, R.G. Basak and N.G. Banerji, 1939, pp. 29-30 and vv. 1.38 and 1.50.
5. E.I. II, 1894, p. 350, v. 4, edited by A. Venis.

clearly mention Varendra as the original kingdom of the Pālas.[1] Except for the fact that Gopāla consolidated his power after putting an end to the state of anarchy, no other information is given about his reign in the inscriptions. Yet, according to Tārānātha,[2] Gopāla was in control of Magadha. Since this is not confirmed by the Pāla inscriptions, R.C. Majumdar[3] ascribes the conquest of Magadha to Gopāla's son Dharmapāla. However, as B.P. Sinha[4] points out, the fact that Dharmapāla could emerge as a weighty competitor of the Pratihāras for the supremacy of northern India, strongly suggests that Magadha was already under the Pālas before Dharmapāla came to the throne.

By the time of the rise of the Pālas, the political scene in western and central India also had changed considerably. The Pratīhāras were emerging as a powerful dynasty in western India, and there was no strong political power in the Kanauj region after Yaśovarman. In the Deccan the Rāṣṭrakūṭas, having overthrown the Cālukyas, were consolidating their strength.[5]

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1. For a full discussion of this question, see A.M. Chowdhury, Dynastic History of Bengal, 1967, pp. 16-18.

2. Ind.Ant. IV, 1875, p. 366.

3. R.C. Majumdar, History of Bengal, I, 1943, pp. 102 ff.

4. B.P. Sinha, The Decline of the Kingdom of Magadha, 1954, p. 333.

5. For the history of the Pratīhāras, see R.S. Tripathi, History of Kanauj, 1937, pp. 219 ff. and B.N. Puri, The History of the Gurjara Pratīhāras, 1957. For the history of the Rāṣṭrakūṭas, see A.S. Altekar, The Rāshtrakūṭas and their Times, 1934.

Thus the beginning of the second half of the eighth century A.D. witnessed the emergence of three major kingdoms in northern India and in the western Deccan, and most of the major political developments that took place in northern India in the following few centuries were connected, in one way or the other, with the intermittent conflict among these rival powers.

Gopāla was succeeded by his son Dharmapāla (c. 781-821)[1] who attempted to expand the Pāla authority westward. His conflicts with the Pratīhāras are revealed by some Pratīhāra and Rāṣṭrakūṭa inscriptions. The inscriptions[2] of Rāṣṭrakūṭa Govinda III, describing the achievements of Dhruva Dhārāvarṣa (c. 780-794 A.D.), mentions his victories over Pratīhāra Vatsarāja 'who boasted of having with ease appropriated the fortunes of the royalty of Gauḍa'. The Sanjan Plates[3] of Amoghavarṣa state with reference to Dhruva that the latter conquered the white umbrellas of the king of Gauḍa who was defeated between the Gaṅgā and Yamunā. This claim is repeated in the later Rāṣṭrakūṭa records. On the evidence of these

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1. A.M. Chowdhury, op.cit., p. 273. The chronology of the Pāla dynasty has been a matter of much controversy. A.M. Chowdhury is the most recent scholar to discuss the problem in detail, using the latest available material. The chronology suggested by him is the most convincing so far, and is therefore followed here.

2. The Radhanpur Plate edited by F. Kielhorn, E.I. VI, 1900-1901, p. 243, ll. 12-13 and the Wani Plate edited by J.F. Fleet, Ind. Ant. XI, 1882, p. 157, ll.

3. E.I. XVIII, 1925-1926, p. 244, v. 14, edited by D.R. Bhandarkar.

inscriptions R.C. Majumdar[1] arrived at the conclusion that the Pratīhāra king Vatsarāja defeated the king of Gauḍa, but later both of them were vanquished by the Rāṣṭrakūṭas. However, Dhruva does not seem to have continued his victorious campaign. The fact that the king of Gauḍa was defeated in the Gaṅgā-Yamunā doab indicates that although Dharmapāla had been defeated by Vatsarāja, his power was by no means crushed.

The next stage of Dharmapāla's campaign to extend his authority seems to have met with some success. The Khalimpur Plate,[2] eulogizing Dharmapāla, states that it was he who installed the king of Kānyakubja, and that his authority was accepted by many kings. This claim is confirmed by the Bhagalpur Plate[3] of Nārāyaṇapāla, which says that Dharmapāla successfully replaced Indrāditya by placing Cakrāyudha on the throne of Mahodaya (Kanauj). Dharmapāla's success in Kanauj must have taken place between the withdrawal of Dhruva from north India and the revival of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa power under Govinda III, who led a successful invasion into north India c. 800 A.D.[4]

The revival of Pratīhāra power under Nāgabhaṭa II intensified the struggle for Kanauj. According to the

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1. Age of Imperial Kanauj, 1955, p. 45.
2. E.I. IV, 1896-1897, pp. 248 ff. v. 12, edited by F. Kielhorn.
3. Ind. Ant. XV, 1886, p. 305, v. 6, edited by E. Hultzsch.
4. Cf. Chowdhury, op.cit., p. 27 and A.S. Altekar, The Rāshtrakūṭas and their Times, 1934, pp. 75 ff.

Gwalior Inscription,[1] Nāgabhaṭa II vanquished Cakrāyudha and then inflicted a defeat upon the king of Vaṅga (Dharmapāla) as well. Another Pratīhāra inscription[2] informs us that this battle took place near Mudgagiri (Monghyr), and this shows that Nāgabhaṭa had advanced right into the Pāla heart-land. Nonetheless, his success seems to have been short-lived. The Rāṣṭrakūṭa king Govinda III, perhaps with a view to checking the growing power of the Pratīhāras, invaded northern India. Several Rāṣṭrakūṭa records claim a decisive victory for Govinda over the Pratīhāras.[3] Though none of these records speaks of a similar victory over Dharmapāla, the Sanjan Plate of Amoghavarṣa mentions that Cakrāyudha and Dharmapāla surrendered to Govinda; but there is no other evidence to support this claim. Govinda, having defeated the Pratīhāras, returned to the Deccan in c. 801 A.D.[4]

Dharmapāla was succeeded by Devapāla (821-861 A.D.).[5] Meanwhile, new rulers appeared in the Rāṣṭrakūṭa and the Pratīhāra kingdoms as well. The successor of Nāgabhaṭa II was a weak ruler and the Rāṣṭrakūṭas, too, had internal problems.[6] The Badal Pillar Inscription

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1. E.I. XVIII, 1925-1926, p. 112.

2. Ibid., p. 98.

3. Radhanpur Plate edited by F. Kielhorn, E.I. VI, 1900-1901, p. 243 ff. v. 13; Sanjan Plate edited by D.R. Bhandarkar, ibid., XVIII, 1925-1926, p. 244, v. 14.

4. Cf. B.P. Sinha, The Decline of the Kingdom of Magadha, 1954, pp. 352-355.

5. A.M. Chowdhury, op.cit., p. 41 and p. 273.

6. Age of Imperial Kanauj, 1955, pp. 28 and 51.

and the Bhagalpur Copper Plate[1] referring to Devapāla's reign, mention that this king successfully invaded Utkala. It appears from some references in the Bhagalpur Plate, that Devapāla had some influence on the ruler of Assam as well.[2] The Badal Pillar Inscription[3] claims that Devapāla's empire extended up to the western sea, and that the king defeated the Drāviḍas. Two inscriptions of Rāṣṭrakūṭa Amoghavarṣa I refer to his clashes with a king of Gauḍa, who has been identified as Devapāla.[4] Hence it is probable that Devapāla's clashes with the Drāviḍas is a reference to his conflict with the Rāṣṭrakūṭas. Devapāla, perhaps in an attempt to exploit the troubled situation in the Rāṣṭrakūṭa kingdom, came into conflict with Amoghavarṣa.

The order of succession to the Pāla throne after Devapāla is not clear. From the Bhagalpur Plate[5] we get the name of Vigrahapāla between Devapāla and Nārāyaṇapāla, but the Badal Pillar Inscription[6] mentions Śūrapāla after Devapāla. Some scholars[7] have suggested to take Vigrahapāla

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1. E.I. II, 1894, p. 163, v. 13, edited by F. Kielhorn.

2. Ind. Ant. XV, 1886, pp. 305, v. 6 and also see R.C. Majumdar, History of Bengal I, 1943, pp. 117-118.

3. E.I. II, 1894, p. 163, v. 13.

4. Nilgund Inscription edited by J.F. Fleet, ibid., VI, 1900-1901, pp. 98 ff. l. 6; and the Sirur Inscription, edited by J.F. Fleet, Ind. Ant. XII, 1883, pp. 218 ff. l. 5. For the identification of the Drāviḍas mentioned in these records see Chowdhury, op.cit., p. 38.

5. Ind. Ant. XV, 1886, pp. 305 ff. v. 6.

6. E.I. II, 1894, p. 163, v. 15.

7. R.C. Majumdar, op.cit., p.127; H.C. Ray, op.cit., I, pp. 297 ff.

and Śūrapāla as the same person. Having studied various interpretations suggested by many scholars on this discrepancy, A.M. Chowdhury[1] has arrived at the conclusion that there was a power struggle between Śūrapāla and Vigrahapāla, who represented another branch of the dynasty; in this struggle Vigrahapāla emerged victorious and the empire passed on to a new line of the same dynasty. Three records belonging to Śūrapāla's reign have been discovered, and they are dated in his third and fifth regnal years. Chowdhury believes that both Śūrapāla and Vigrahapāla I were contemporaries, and therefore assigns reign periods of about five years to both of them.[2]

Even if there was a division of the empire under Śūrapāla and Vigrahapāla I, Nārāyaṇapāla (866-920 A.D.), the son of the latter, seems to have controlled an unified empire. We have no information of any military activities of Nārāyaṇapāla or his immediate predecessors. Meanwhile, in his Nilgund[3] and Sirur[4] Inscriptions Amoghavarṣa I claimed victories over Gauḍa and Vaṅga, and if these claims are true, the conflicts may have taken place during a possible power struggle that followed the death of Devapāla. Though Nārāyaṇapāla became the ruler of a unified empire, a serious threat to the very existence of

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1. A.M. Chowdhury, op.cit., pp. 43-52.
2. Ibid., p. 41 and p. 273.
3. E.I. 1900-1901, p. 103, v. 5, edited by J.F. Fleet.
4. Ind. Ant. XII, 1883, p.218, l. 5, edited by J.F. Fleet.

the Pāla empire occurred possibly after his seventeenth regnal year.[1] Several inscriptions belonging to the reign of Mahendrapāla I (c. 885-910 A.D.) of the Pratīhāra dynasty, have been found in various parts of Bihar and north Bengal.[2] The discovery of these inscriptions has proved beyond doubt that from the early days of Mahendrapāla's reign, at least southern Bihar was under the Pratīhāras. An inscription[3] of this ruler, found in north Bengal, is dated Vikrama saṁvat 955 (A.D. 898/9). This shows that some time later in his rule, Mahendrapāla extended his authority over north Bengal as well.

Pratīhāra rule in Bihar and Bengal does not seem to have lasted very long, for we have an inscription[4] of Nārāyaṇapāla, dated in his 54th regnal year, from Bihar, which indicates that the Pālas regained control of this region in or before the date of this inscription. The reoccupation of this area by the Pālas must have been facilitated by the political instability in the Pratīhāra kingdom after the death of Mahendrapāla I, and also by the repeated invasions by the Rāṣṭrakūṭas into the Pratīhāra kingdom.[5]

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1. This is the date of his Bhagalpur Plate which is indicative of his authority over Bihar, cf. Ind. Ant. XV, 1885, pp. 305 ff.

2. R.D. Banerji, The Pālas of Bengal, 1915, pp. 63-65.

3. Ibid., p. 75.

4. An Image Inscription from Bihar, edited by R.D. Banerji, Ind. Ant. XLVII, 1918, p. 110.

5. Age of Imperial Kanauj, 1955, p. 33 and p. 53.

Nārāyaṇapāla was succeeded by his son Rājyapāla (c. 920-952 A.D.),[1] whose Bhaturiya Inscription,[2] dated in his 32nd regnal year, claims that his command was obeyed by Mlecchas, Aṅgas, Kaliṅgas, Vaṅgas, Odras, Pāṇḍyas, Karṇāṭas, Lāṭas, Suhmas, Kīrātas and the Cīnas. This is merely a conventional list of conquests which cannot be considered as sober history. Rājyapāla may have had some successes against his neighbours and also against the Pratīhāras whose power was declining after Mahīpāla.[3] Though it is possible to think that there was a revival of the Pāla power under Rājyapāla, after him it was continuously threatened by the Candellas and the Kalacuris. During the reigns of Gopāla II (c. 958-969 A.D.)[4] and Vigrahapāla II (C. 969-995 A.D.),[5] the successors of Rājyapāla, the Candella king Yaśovarman led several invasions into the Pāla kingdom. Yaśovarman's successor Dhaṅga is also said to have led an expedition against Rāḍha (West Bengal).[6] A.M. Chowdhury[7] thinks that this second Candella attack was perhaps against the Kāmboja rulers who had then occupied Gauḍa, and if so,

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1. A.M. Chowdhury, Dynastic History of Bengal, 1967, p. 59 and p. 273.
2. E.I. XXXIII, 1959-1960, p. 154, v. 7, edited by D.C. Sircar.
3. Cf. B.N. Puri, The History of the Gurjara Pratīhāras, 1957, pp. 80 ff.
4. Chowdhury, op.cit., pp. 63-64 and p. 273.
5. Ibid., p. 64 and p. 273.
6. Age of Imperial Kanauj, 1955, p. 84.
7. Chowdhury, op.cit., p. 67, also see infra, p. 56

the raid would have helped the Pālas to recapture their lost territory.

The Kalacuri rulers Yuvarāja I and Lakṣmaṇarāja (second and third quarters of the tenth century A.D.) are also said to have invaded Bengal, and Lakṣmaṇarāja's invasion was probably against the Candras of southeastern Bengal.[1] The mention in the Candella and the Kalacuri records of the kingdoms of Rāḍha, Gauḍa and Vaṅgāla, instead of one kingdom, has been interpreted by Chowdhury[2] as implying that, by this time, there were different independent principalities in Bengal. There is, in fact, positive evidence for the existence of the Candra kingdom in southeastern Bengal.[3] And as will be seen below, the Kāmbojas had also carved out an independent kingdom from the northern parts of the Pāla kingdom.[4] In the face of these developments it appears that during the reigns of Gopāla II and Vigrahapāla II, the Pāla dominion was confined to a small area probably covering Aṅga and Magadha.

Mahīpāla I (c. 995-1043 A.D.),[5] who succeeded Vigrahapāla II, claims in his inscriptions to have 'obtained his paternal kingdom which had been snatched

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1. Chowdhury, op.cit., p. 67.
2. Ibid.
3. Infra, p. 53
4. Infra, p. 46
5. A.M. Chowdhury, op.cit., pp. 86-87 and p. 273.

away through pride of prowess by those who had no claim to it'.[1] How and why his paternal kingdom was lost is not mentioned, but it must have happened after the sixth year of Gopāla II who was then in control of northern Bengal, as is proved by his Jajilpara Inscription.[2] We know from the Irda Plate[3] of Nayapāla, that the Kāmbojas were in control of northern and western Bengal in the second half of the tenth century A.D. This plate introduces three kings of this family, namely Rājyapāla, Nārāyaṇapāla and Nayapāla. There is no definite information about the rise of this family, who may once have been subordinates of the Pālas. As Mahīpāla I reconquered his paternal kingdom, which is generally considered to have been north Bengal, Kāmboja rule must have come to an end by the beginning of the eleventh century A.D. However, A.M. Chowdhury[4] proposes to identify king Dharmapāla of Daṇḍabhukti, who is said to have been vanquished by Rājendra Cōḷa in his military expedition to north India between 1021-1024 A.D., as a Kāmboja ruler. If this supposition is accepted, it would follow that the Kāmbojas, though ousted from northern Bengal, continued to rule in southwestern Bengal bordering

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1. Belwa Copper Plate of Mahīpāla I, edited by D.C. Sircar, E.I. XXIX, 1951-1952, p. 7, v. 11.

2. Jajilpara Inscription, edited by R.C. Majumdar, J.A.S.B. Letters, XVII, 1951, pp. 140-144.

3. E.I. XXII, 1933-1934, pp. 154-157, vv. 7-17, edited by N.G. Majumdar.

4. A.M. Chowdhury, op.cit., pp. 73-74.

Orissa.

Mahīpāla I seems to have conquered all parts of Bihar and perhaps even extended his rule as far as Benares.[1] Details of another incident of political importance that took place in the reign of Mahīpāla I, come from the Tirumalai Inscription of Rājendra Cōḷa. This inscription[2] states that the Cōḷa army under Rājendra proceeded from Orissa and Kosala, attacked and overthrew Dharmapāla of Daṇḍabhukti, Raṇasūra of Dakṣiṇa Rāḍha and Govindacandra of Vangāladeśa, and finally defeated Mahīpāla in uttara Rāḍha, before reaching the Ganges. Rājendra's military campaign lasted only two years, and as Nilakantha Sastri[3] puts it, was nothing more than a hurried raid across a vast stretch of territory.

Mahīpāla I was succeeded by his son Nayapāla (c. 1043-1058 A.D.).[4] Although two small inscriptions - both dated in his fifteenth regnal year - have been found, they contain no information relating to the political conditions during his reign. The reign of Nayapāla's son and successor Vgrahapāla III (c. 1058-1075 A.D.),[5] witnessed an invasion by the Kalacuri king Lakṣmīkarṇa. Though the Kalacuri records[6] claim victory for Lakṣmīkarṇa,

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1. R.C. Majumdar, History of Bengal, I, 1943, p. 140.

2. E.I., IX, 1907-1908, p. 232, ll. 9-11, edited by E. Hultzsch.

3. K.N. Sastri, The Colas, I, 1925, p. 247.

4. A.M. Chowdhury, op.cit., p. 91 and p. 273.

5. Ibid., pp. 91-92 and p. 273.

6. Bheragat Inscription, edited by F. Kielhorn, E.I. II, 1894, p. 11, v. 12, and Karanbel Inscription of Jayasiṁha, Ind.Ant., XVIII, 1889, p. 215, v. 11.

it appears from the Rāmacarita[1] that Vigrahapāla defeated Lakṣmīkarṇa in battle but later became friendly and entered into a matrimonial alliance with him. Although the threat from the Kalacuris came to an end with this alliance, very soon the Pālas had to bear the brunt of a series of invasions from the Cālukyas. Cālukya inscriptions[2] claim that Someśvara II (c. 1068-1076 A.D.) and Vikramāditya VI (c. 1076-1127 A.D.) shattered the pride of many countries including Vaṅga and Gauḍa. It appears that Mahāśivagupta Yayāti (c. 1025-1055 A.D.) and Udyotakeśarī (c. 1055-1080 A.D.), who were rulers of Kosala (the latter was also in control of Orissa), also invaded the Pāla kingdom.[3]

Vigrahapāla III was succeeded by his eldest son Mahīpāla III (c. 1075-1080 A.D.),[4] and most of the information about the reigns of this ruler and some of his successors, come from the Rāmacarita. According to this poem, Mahīpāla's sāmantas revolted against him, and in this struggle the king was killed, Varendra became independent under the Kaivarta chief Divya.[5] It appears that during these troubles Mahīpāla imprisoned his younger brothers Śūrapāla and Rāmapāla, suspected of

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1. Rāmacarita, (V.R.S. ed.), pp. 7-8.
2. Sudi Inscription of Someśvara, edited by L.D. Barnet, E.I. XV, 1919-1920, p. 87, ll. 4-5; and Kelawadi Inscription, edited by J.F. Fleet, ibid., IV, 1896-1897, p. 261, l. 8.
3. Struggle for Empire, 1966, pp. 221-222.
4. A.M. Chowdhury, op.cit., p. 272 and p. 111.
5. Rāmacarita (V.R.S. ed.), pp. 29-30.

being supporters of the rebels. From the Manahali Grant[1] we learn that Mahīpāla III was succeeded by his brother Śūrapāla. He too seems to have had a very short reign of only two years.[2]

Rāmapāla (c. 1082-1124 A.D.),[3] the hero of the Rāmacarita, became king after Śūrapāla. In the meantime, the Kaivartas, having established an independent kingdom in Varendra, were gradually consolidating their power. According to the Rāmacarita Commentary,[4] Varendra was ruled successively by Divya, his younger brother Ruḍoka and his son Bhīma. Rāmapāla was able to win the sāmantas to his side by enormous gifts, and waged war against the Kaivartas. After several battles, Bhīma was defeated and killed, and Varendra was re-annexed to the Pāla dominion.[5] Rāmapāla was thus able to give a new lease of life to the Pāla empire. He was succeeded by his son Kumārapāla (c. 1124-1129 A.D.),[6] who was succeeded by his son Gopāla III (c. 1129-1143 A.D.).[7] Gopāla was succeeded by his uncle (Kumārapāla's brother) Madanpāla

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1. J.A.S.B. LXIX, pt. 1, 1900, p. 68, v. 15, edited by N.N. Vasu.
2. A.M. Chowdhury, op.cit., p. 272 and p. 112.
3. Ibid., p. 272 and p. 113.
4. Rāmacarita (V.R.S. ed.), p. 30.
5. Ibid., I, vv. 43-45.
6. A.M. Chowdhury, op.cit., p. 272 and p. 129.
7. Ibid., p. 272 and p. 129.

(c. 1143-1161 A.D.).[1] Madanapāla was the last known ruler who can definitely be connected with the imperial Pāla dynasty.

Though Rāmapāla was able to hold the Pāla kingdom together after the restoration of his authority over Varendra, it appears that some parts of Bihar were lost to the Gāhaḍavālas at a later stage. The Maner Plate[2] which records the donation by king Govindacandra, of a village near Patna (1124 A.D.) clearly proves that the Gāhaḍavālas were in effective control of some parts of Bihar. Apart from the Gāhaḍavālas, the Cālukyas also claim to have led a series of invasions into the Pāla territory in the first half of the twelfth century.[3] However, the discovery in Bihar of some inscriptions[4] of the time of Madanapāla suggests that this king was able to hold on to at least some parts of Bihar. But after him, the Gāhaḍavāla king Vijayacandra (c. 1155-1170 A.D.) successfully conquered most of Bihar.[5] Meanwhile, the Senas took northern Bengal from the Pālas and established an independent kingdom there.

Several manuscripts[6] and two stone inscriptions[7]

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1. A.M. Chowdhury, op.cit., p. 134.
2. J.A.S.B. XVIII, 1922, pp. 83-84, ll. 11 ff., edited by N.G. Majumdar.
3. A.M. Chowdhury, op.cit., p. 133.
4. Bihar Hill Inscription, A. Cunningham, Arch.Surv.Ind.Rep. III, 1871/2, p. 124, no. 16; and Valagadur Inscription, ibid., no. 17.
5. A.M. Chowdhury, op.cit., p. 133.
6. R.D. Banerji, The Pālas of Bengal, 1915, pp. 110-112.
7. Ibid., p. 109 and A. Cunningham, Arch.Surv.Ind.Rep. XV, 1882, p. 155.

refer to a certain Govindapāla who seems to have ruled in the Gaya region after Madanapāla. The Jayanagar Image Inscription[1] refers to the 35th regnal year of another ruler named Gauḍeśvara Palapāla. Except for the fact that these two kings had the name-ending Pāla, there is no other evidence to connect them with the Pāla dynasty. Perhaps they were two independent rulers who emerged after the disintegration of the Pāla kingdom.

Although it is well known that the Pālas came into power in northern Bengal and extended their authority over Magadha as well, until recently very little was known of the political history of the southern and eastern parts of Bengal. We saw in a previous discussion that the so-called Khaḍga dynasty was in control of eastern Bengal, some time before the rise of the Pālas in northern Bengal. The existence of an independent dynasty in eastern Bengal is proved by three copper-plate inscriptions and a large number of coins.[2] From these inscriptions we learn of four members of this dynasty, viz. Śāntideva, Vīradeva, Ānandadeva and Bhavadeva.[3] They are all given the royal title of mahārādhirāja, which indicates their sovereign position. The capital of these rulers - at least of Bhavadeva - was Devaparvata,[4]

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1. Jour. Bihar Res. Soc. XLI, 1955, p. 153, ll. 1-2, edited by D.C. Sircar.

2. F.A. Khan, Mainamati, 1963, pp. 19 ff.

3. Ibid., and the Copper Plate of Bhavadeva of Devaparvata, edited by D.C. Sircar, J.A.S.B. Letters, XVII, 1951, p. 192, ll. 7 ff.

4. F.A. Khan, op.cit., pp. 19-20.

which must have been situated in the Mainamati hills, as all the copper plates and most of the coins of the dynasty have been found in this region.

None of the copper plates of the Devas is dated in any known era, and hence, their date is conjectural. F.A. Khan[1] believed that these plates could, on palaeographical grounds, be assigned to the last part of the seventh century and the middle of the eighth century A.D. But A.H. Dani[2] is inclined to assign the two Mainamati plates of the Devas to a date closer to the Khalimpur Plate of Dharmapāla. D.C. Sircar[3] is also of the opinion that the Copper Plate of Bhavadeva belongs to the eighth or the ninth century A.D. So, on the basis of these suggestions, it would seem safer to assign the two Mainamati Plates to the second half of the eighth century. Accordingly, the four Deva kings may broadly be assigned to the eighth century and probably ruled between the Khaḍgas and the Harikelas.

The existence of another independent dynasty in southeastern Bengal is known from the Chittagong Plate[4] of Kāntideva, which has been assigned to the ninth century A.D. by R.C. Majumdar.[5] Though the record refers

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1. Ibid., pp. 19-20.
2. A.H. Dani, Indian Palaeography, 1963, p. 135.
3. J.A.S.B. Letters, XVII, 1951, pp. 89-90.
4. E.I. XXVI, 1941-1942, pp. 313-318, edited by R.C. Majumdar.
5. Ibid., p. 315.

to three generations of the family, only Kāntideva is given full royal titles indicating independent status. His copper plate was issued from Vardhamānapura and is addressed to the future rulers of the Harikela mandala[1] which has been identified as the Sylhet region of Bangladesh.[2]

Several copper plates from the Mainamati, Paschimbhag, Sylhet and Comilla regions of Bengal reveal the names of seven generations of kings of the Candra dynasty that held sway over southeastern Bengal. According to the geneology given in these records the first member of the dynasty was a certain Pūrṇacandra who was followed successively by Suvarṇacandra, Trailokyacandra, Śrīcandra, Kalyāṇacandra, Laḍahacandra and Govindacandra.[3] As none of the records of the Candras is dated in any known era, the chronology of the dynasty has to be determined by other means. A.M. Chowdhury[4] identifies king Govindacandra of Vaṅgāladeśa, mentioned in the Tirumalai Inscription[5] of Rājendra Cōḷa, with his namesake of the Candra dynasty and, on this identification, concludes that Govindacandra was ruling at the time of the Cōḷa invasion,

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1. E.I. XXVI, 1941-1942, p. 317, ll. 13-14.
2. For various literary references to Harikela and a discussion on its identification see, A.M. Chowdhury, Dynastic History of Bengal, 1967, pp. 150-152.
3. Pakistan Archaeology, III, 1966, pp. 50-51, vv. 4-11, edited by A.H. Dani.
4. Dynastic History of Bengal, 1967, pp. 155-156.
5. E.I. IX, 1907-1908, p. 232, ll. 9-11, edited by E. Hultzsch.

i.e. 1021-1024 A.D. Further, on the strength of some evidence from the Śabdapradīpa, Chowdhury establishes that the Cōḷa invasion took place in the early years of Govindacandra's reign. On the basis of these data he suggests the following chronology for the Candras: Śrīcandra c. 930-975 A.D.; Kalyāṇacandra c. 975-1000 A.D.; Laḍahacandra c. 1000-1020 A.D. and Govindacandra c. 1020-1050 A.D.[1] As there is no information on the length of the reign of Trailokyacandra and his predecessors, the only possible suggestion is that Trailokyacandra must have reigned in the early part of the tenth century A.D., and his two predecessors must have lived in the ninth century.

As the first two members of the Candra dynasty are not given any royal titles it is probable that they were not sovereign rulers. The Dhulla Plate[2] of Śrīcandra describes Trailokyacandra as the 'support of the Fortune Goddess (of the kings) smiling at the umbrella which was the insignia of the king of Harikela, who became the king of Candradvīpa'. This statement has been interpreted to indicate that Trailokyacandra was first subordinate to the Harikela kings, before becoming an independent king in Candradvīpa.[3] The Sylhet Plate[4] of Śrīcandra claims victory for Trailokyacandra over the Kāmbojas. This

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1. Chowdhury, op.cit., pp. 154-157.
2. E.I. XXXIII, 1959-1960, pp. 138-140, ll. 9-10, edited by D.C. Sircar.
3. A.M. Chowdhury, op.cit., pp. 158-159.
4. Quoted in ibid., p. 167.

may be taken as a reference to Trailokyacandra's success over the Kāmboja rulers who had conquered western Bengal.

Śrīcandra who succeeded his father seems to have extended his authority to neighbouring lands. His Sylhet Plate[1] mentions that he conquered Kāmarūpa. The Mainamati Plate[2] of Laḍahacandra, which repeats the above claim, makes a casual reference to a clash between Śrīcandra and the Gauḍas. The Dacca Plate[3] of Kalyāṇacandra states that Śrīcandra reinstated Gopāla (evidently Gopāla II). Perhaps this refers to Śrīcandra's help to Gopāla against some enemy, possibly the Kāmbojas. The Sylhet Plate[4] also lists Śrīcandra's victories over the Utkalas, Yavanas and the Hūṇas, but there is no way to check the authenticity of this statement.

Śrīcandra's successor was his son Kalyāṇacandra, and the Maināmati Plate[5] of Laḍahacandra, makes an indirect reference to Kalyāṇacandra's successes against the Gauḍas. Laḍahacandra who issued two of the Mainamati Copper Plates, succeeded Kalyāṇacandra. We have no information of his political achievements though his records refer to his religious activities. Laḍahacandra was succeeded by his son Govindacandra who may have been the king of Vaṅgāladeśa, defeated by Rājendra Cōḷa.[6]

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1. A.M. Chowdhury, op.cit., pp. 172-173.
2. Pakistan Archaeology, III, 1966, p. 38, v. 6, edited by A.H. Dani.
3. Quoted in A.M. Chowdhury, op.cit., pp. 174-175.
4. Ibid., pp. 175-176.
5. Pakistan Archaeology, III, 1966, p. 38, v. 8, edited by A.H. Dani.
6. See supra, p.53

A.M. Chowdhury[1] believes that Kalacuri Karṇa's victory over a king of Vaṅga, as recorded in some Kalacuri inscriptions, was won against Govindacandra. He is the last known member of the Candra dynasty, and soon we have evidence for the rise of the Varman dynasty in southeast Bengal.

Information about the Varmans is based on three copper plates and one stone inscription. According to the Belava Copper Plate,[2] Jātavarman, the first sovereign ruler of the dynasty, married Vīraśrī, the daughter of king Karṇa who is generally identified as the Kalacuri ruler (c. 1041-1070 A.D.) of that name. The record also says that Jātavarman 'brought to disgrace the strength of the arms of Divya' who is identified as the Kaivarta chief who revolted against the Pālas. On the basis of this identification it is possible to suggest that Jātavarman rose to power between 1041 and 1080 A.D.[3] The marriage with Karṇa's daughter must have strengthened his position as a sovereign ruler. The exact length of Jātavarman's reign is not known, but from the Vajrayogini Plate[4] of Sāmalavarman we learn that Jātavarman was succeeded by his son Harivarman whose activities remain obscure.

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1. A.M. Chowdhury, op.cit., p. 186.
2. E.I. XII, 1913-1914, pp. 37-43, v. 8, edited by R.G. Basak.
3. A.M. Chowdhury, op.cit., pp. 191-194.
4. E.I. XXX, 1953-1954, p. 257, ll. 2-3, edited by N.K. Bhattasali.

Harivarman was followed by his brother Sāmalavarman, whose reign has been placed in the first half of the twelfth century A.D.[1] He was succeeded by his son Bhojavarman whose Belava Copper Plate was issued in his fifth regnal year. He was the last known king of this dynasty before the Varmans were ousted from power by the Senas.

The Senas emerged on the political scene of Bengal towards the end of the eleventh century A.D., when Pāla power was rapidly declining. It is now fairly certain that the Senas migrated to Bengal from Karṇāṭaka, as their records claim, and possibly gained a position of power under the Pālas.[2] Sāmantasena was the first historical figure of this dynasty; however, nothing definite can be said of his achievements except for the fact that it was he who established some basis of political power for his family. As the dates of Sāmantasena's successors have now been fixed with a fair degree of certainty, it is probable that he lived in the last quarter of the eleventh century A.D.[3] Sāmantasena was succeeded by his son Hemantasena who is given the epithet mahārājādhirāja in the Barrackpur Copper Plate[4] of Vijayasena. He, too, must have lived in the last quarter of the eleventh century. Hemantasena and his father must

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1. A.M. Chowdhury, Dynastic History of Bengal, 1967, pp. 198-201.
2. R.C. Majumdar, History of Bengal, I, 1943, pp. 205-209.
3. Ibid., p. 210.
4. N.G. Majumdar, Inscriptions of Bengal, III, 1929, p. 62, l. 23.

have been able to exploit the troubled situation in the Pāla kingdom to their favour and gradually establish an independent kingdom for themselves.

Vijayasena (c. 1097-1160 A.D.),[1] who succeeded Hemantasena, had a long reign of more than 62 years as is evident from his Barrackpur Copper Plate.[2] His Deopara Inscription[3] makes specific mention of his victories over Nānya (identified as Nānyadeva (c. 1097-1147 A.D.) a Karṇāṭaka chief of Mithilā), Vīra (identified as a member of Rāmapāla's sāmanta-cakra), Vardhana (identified as Dvāparavardhana, the ruler of Kausāmbī) and Rāghava (the eastern Gāṅga ruler of Kaliṅganagara).[4] The list also includes the rulers of Gauḍa and Kāmarūpa. The Gauḍa ruler who was 'made to flee' by Vijayasena was most probably Madanapāla. Madanapāla's rule over north Bengal up to his eighth regnal year (c. 1152/3 A.D.) is evident from his Manahali Grant. Vijayasena's Deopara Inscription bears testimony to Sena authority over north Bengal, so that this area must have come under his control after 1152/3 A.D. Perhaps it was Vijayasena who dealt the death-blow to the crumbling Pāla power.

The fact that the Barrackpur Plate, which is dated in Vijayasena's 62nd regnal year, was issued from

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1. A.M. Chowdhury, op.cit., p. 220.

2. N.G. Majumdar, op.cit., pp. 57-67.

3. E.I. I, 1892, pp. 305-315, vv. 20-22, edited by F. Kielhorn.

4. For a discussion and the identification of these rulers see A.M. Chowdhury, op.cit., pp. 224-225.

Vikramapura,[1] once the capital of the Candras and the Varmans, makes it clear that Vijayasena was also successful in eliminating Varman rule from southeastern Bengal. Vijayasena is also said to have fought against Kaliṅga and Kāmarūpa.[2] Perhaps the clash with Kaliṅga took place in an attempt to check the power of the eastern Gāṅga king Rāghava who is said to have levied tribute from the lands bordering the Ganges.[3]

Vijayasena's son Vallālasena succeeded him c. 1160 A.D.[4] Two of his inscriptions have been found so far, but they do not contain any information pertaining to his political activities. However, the Sanokhar Inscription,[5] dated in his ninth regnal year, gives the indication that the Sanokhar region in eastern Magadha was under his authority. We have seen earlier that after Madanapāla, the whole of western Magadha was annexed by the Gāhaḍavālas, but Govindapāla and Palapāla were able to hold on to eastern Magadha. It is, therefore, probable that it was from them that the Senas captured that area.

Information about the reign of Lakṣmaṇasena (c. 1178-1206 A.D.),[6] the successor of Vallālasena, is

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1. N.G. Majumdar, op.cit., pp. 57-67.
2. Deopara Inscription, edited by F. Kielhorn, E.I. I, 1892, pp. 305-315, vv. 20-22.
3. See infra, p. 78
4. A.M. Chowdhury, op.cit., p. 220.
5. E.I. XXX, 1953-1954, edited by D.C. Sircar.
6. A.M. Chowdhury, Dynastic History of Bengal, pp. 219-220.

found not only in his inscriptions but also in some Muslim records. However, five of his inscriptions were issued before his sixth regnal year. The Bhowal Copper Plate,[1] dated in Lakṣmaṇasena's 27th regnal year, states that this king had been victorious in battles even in his childhood, but does not refer to his achievements as a king. The records of his successors claim that he planted victory pillars at Puri, Benares and Allahabad,[2] but there is no evidence that the Senas had any control over these areas.

Towards the close of Lakṣmaṇasena's reign, when he was too old to control the affairs of the state, there were clear signs of disintegration of the Sena kingdom. The Sundarban Plate[3] of Ḍommaṇapāla, dated in Śaka era 1118 (1169 A.D.), proves the existence of an independent ruler in the eastern part of Khāḍī maṇḍala (identified as the Sundarban area). The Mainamati Plate[4] of Raṇavaṁkamalla Harikeladeva, dated in the Śaka era 1142 (1220 A.D.), and in the king's sixteenth regnal year, shows that Raṇavaṁkamalla had been an independent king in the present Comilla region of Bangladesh, at least from 1204 A.D. In 1204 A.D. Bengal was invaded by the Muslims under Bakhtyār-Khaljī who made a surprise attack on Nadiya,

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1. E.I. XXVI, 1941-1942, pp. 5-10, ll. 17 ff., edited by H.N. Randle.

2. Madanapara Plate, N.G. Majumdar, Inscriptions of Bengal, III, 1929, pp. 132-139, v. 13.

3. I.H.Q. X, 1934, pp. 322-331, edited by B.C. Sen.

4. Ibid., IX, 1933, pp. 286-287, l. 24, edited by D.C. Bhattacharyya.

the capital of Lakṣmaṇasena, causing the king to take refuge in eastern Bengal. Bakhtyār captured western and northern Bengal and laid the foundation for Muslim rule in the region. Nevertheless, eastern Bengal still remained in the hands of Lakṣmaṇasena and his successors for some time.[1]

Orissa Since the End of Śaśāṅka's Reign

Although the disintegration of Śaśāṅka's empire after his death brought chaos to Bengal, it also gave an opportunity for at least some parts of Orissa to regain their sovereignty. As we saw in an earlier discussion,[2] the Śailodbhavas in Kongoda had to accept the suzerainty of Śaśāṅka, and Mādhavarāja II served as his feudatory. However, the Puri Grant[3] of Mādhavarāja II, dated in his 23rd regnal year, does not refer to any overlord, which suggests that he was an independent ruler. Hiuen-Tsang, visiting Kongoda soon after Śaśāṅka's death, mentions that the ruler of Kongoda was very powerful and was also in control of neighbouring provinces.[4] Also according to Hiuen-Tsang, Harṣavardhana led an expedition

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1. For the Muslim invasion of Bengal, see Elliot and Dowson, History of India as Told by Its own Historians, I, 1886, pp. 2, 12, 19 and 74; also see A.M. Chowdhury op.cit., pp. 248 ff.

2. See supra, p. 27

3. E.I. XXIII, 1935-1936, p. 128, ll. 23-25, edited by R.G. Basak.

4. Watters, On Yuan Chwang's Travels, II, 1904-1950, p. 195.

as far south as Kongoda, presumably after Śaśāṅka's death; how far Harṣa's attempt was successful is not known.[1]

Mādhavarāja II was succeeded by his son Ayaśobhīta Madhyamarāja whose Parikud Grant[2] was issued in his 26th regnal year. This record states that he celebrated the aśvamedha and vājapeya sacrifices, which may suggest that he was a powerful king. Perhaps his father was able to exploit the chaotic political situation that followed the death of Śaśāṅka and build up a strong kingdom. On the assumption that Mādhavarāja II ruled in the first half of the seventh century A.D., Madhyamarāja's rule may be assigned to the second half of the same century.

Madhyamarāja's death appears to have been followed by a bitter struggle for the throne between his two sons. From the inscriptions[3] of his eldest son Dharmarāja we learn that Dharmarāja defeated in battle his younger brother Mādhava and captured the throne. However, the history of the Śailodbhavas after Dharmarāja is not very clear. A single plate from Tekkali gives the names of three kings who succeeded Dharmarāja. They were his son Raṇakṣobha (Madhyamarāja II), brother

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1. See supra, p.28

2. E.I. XI, 1911-1912, p. 286, l. 45, edited by R.D. Banerji.

3. Kondena Grant, edited by Y.R. Gupte, E.I. XIX, 1927-1928, pp. 269, ll. 26 ff.

Allavarāja and grandon Madhayamarāja III.[1] No other information is available about these rulers; perhaps their rule ended in the middle of the eighth century A.D. or a little later.

A large number of inscriptions found in the present districts of Cuttack, Puri, Dhenkanal and in the northern parts of the Ganjam district of Orissa reveal the existence of a dynasty, most of the members of which had the name-ending kara. They claim to have descended from Bhūmi, the Earth; therefore this dynasty is commonly known as the Bhauma-karas. They had their capital at Guheśvarapāṭaka, and held sway over Kongoda and most parts of Utkala. Although there are a considerable number of inscriptions of this dynasty, these contain little information of these rulers; hence, the present state of our knowledge of them is largely limited to their genealogy.

The records trace the ancestry of the dynasty back to a certain Lakṣmīkara who was followed by mahārāja Kṣemaṅkaradeva. The son and successor of Kṣemaṅkara was mahārāja Śivakara I, alias Unmattasiṁha,[2] whose only known date is 50 or 20 of an unnamed era.[3] Śivakara I was succeeded by his son Śubhākara I, and the date of his Neulpur Plate has been read by R.D. Banerji[4] as 8, but is

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1. Jour. Bihar Or. Res. Soc. IV, 1918, pp. 165 ff.

2. The first part of this name is apparently a Prakrit form of the Sanskrit word unmatta.

3. B. Misra, Orissa Under the Bhauma Kings, 1934, p. 56.

4. E.I. XV, 1919-1920, p. 5, l. 30.

54 according to B. Misra.[1] Śubhākara I is said to have subdued the people of Kaliṅga. His successor was his son Śivakara II, who in turn was succeeded by his brother Śāntikara I, also described as Gayāḍa I and Lalitahāra I. His Dhauli cave Inscription is dated 93.[2] His successor was his son Śubhākara II begotten on Tribhuvanamahādevī (I). At the death of Śubhākara II, the kingdom passed on to Śubhākara III, also known as Kusumahāra I, the son of Śāntikara I and Gosvāminī. The last known date of Śubhākara III is the year 103.[3] His Hindol and Dharakota Plates[4] clearly indicate his authority over both southern and northern Tosalī.

Śubhākara III died a premature death, and at this moment his mother, Tribhuvanamahādevī I ascended the throne. She was succeeded by her grandson, Śantikara II.[5] He had two sons, and the eldest, Śubhākara IV, succeeded him as king. His wife was Pṛthivīmahādevi III alias Tribhuvanamahādevī II, the daughter of Svabhāvatuṅga, the ruler of Kosala.[6] Śubhākara IV was followed to the throne by his younger brother Śivakara III alias Loṇabhāra II, whose only known date is the year

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1. B. Misra, Orissa under the Bhauma Kings, 1934, p. 7.
2. Ibid., p. 11, ll. 1-5.
3. Hindol Plate of Śubhākara, B. Misra, op.cit., p. 15, l. 25.
4. Ibid., pp. 21-22.
5. Talcher Plate, year 141, ibid., pp. 35-36, ll. 13-19.
6. Baud Plates of Tribhuvanamahādevī, edited by D.C. Sircar, E.I. XXIX, 1951-1952, p. 219, ll. 17-20.

149.[1] After Śivakara III, Pṛthivīmahādevī III, the wife of Śubhākara IV, occupied the throne, and her Baud Plates are dated in the year 158.[2] The events leading to her succession are not known, but some scholars[3] have suggested that it was facilitated by the interference of her father who, in his ninth regnal year, issued a grant donating land situated in Dakṣiṇa-Tosalī, an area once included in the Bhauma-kara dominion.[4] Pṛthivīmahādevī's reign is not referred to in the records of the later members of the dynasty. For this, N.K. Sahu[5] offers the interpretation that this queen was ousted by her rivals who placed Siddhagaurī Tribhuvanamahādevī, the wife of Śivakara III, on the throne.

Tribhuvanamahādevī was succeeded by two of her sons Śāntikara III, and Śubhākara V, respectively. None of these kings seems to have had any sons. Śubhākara V was succeeded by his wife Gaurī to be followed by her daughter whose last known date is the year 187.[6] The throne then passed on to Vakulamahādevī, another wife of Śubhākara V. The only available inscription of this queen is dated 200.[7]

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1. Talcher Plate, year 149, B. Misra, op.cit., pp. 42-43.
2. E.I. XXIX, 1951-1952, p. 218, l. 36.
3. D.C. Sircar in I.H.Q. XXIX, 1953, pp. 154-155.
4. Cuttack Plate of Mahāśivagupta, edited by J.F. Fleet, E.I. III, 1894-1895, pp. 351-354.
5. N.K. Sahu, A History of Orissa, II, 1956, p. 350.
6. B. Misra, op.cit., p. 64, l. 36 (Kumurang Plate of Daṇḍimahādevī).
7. The Grant of Vakulamahādevī, edited by P.R. Srinivasan, E.I. XXXVI, 1966, p. 310, ll. 17-19.

Her successor was Dharmamahādevī, the queen of Śāntikara III. She was the last known member of the Bhauma-kara dynasty, and its end is obscure.

Thus it becomes clear that this dynasty had an unbroken succession of rulers whose records are dated in a certain era, the origin of which is yet unknown. Their rule covered a period of not less than two centuries over a large part of present Orissa. As the era used in the Bhauma-kara inscriptions is unknown, the chronology of the dynasty is a matter of much controversy. Some scholars[1] believed that those records are dated in the Harṣa era. If this is accepted the date of the earliest known inscription of the dynasty would be 626 or 656 A.D.[2] As we saw earlier, at this time the area over which the Bhauma-karas ruled must still have been under the control of the Śailodbhavas, and hence, it is difficult to account for two dynasties simultaneously reigning in the same area.

On this question, Sylvain Lévi[3] drew attention to the fact that in the year 795 A.D., the Chinese emperor Te-tsong received an autographed Buddhist manuscript from the king of Wu-ch'a (Orissa), whose name is translated as 'the fortunate monarch who does what is pure, the lion'. Lévi suggested that a name like Śubhakara would correspond with the Chinese translation, and accordingly proposed to identify Śubhakara I as the

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1. B. Misra, op.cit., pp. 77-79.
2. See supra, p. 63
3. E.I. XV, 1919-1920, p. 363.

king who sent the manuscript. Yet, B. Misra[1] challenged this supposition pointing to the fact that the name of the particular Bhaumakara king was Śubhākara, not Śubhakara. However, R.C. Majumdar[2] stated that this difficulty can be avoided, if the king of Orissa is identified not with Śubhākara, but with his father Śivakara, as the words śubha and śiva are, in his view, synonymous. But it may be pointed out that much importance cannot be attached to this point, for it is possible that the Chinese translator confounded the two words. On the other hand, there were several Bhaumakara kings who had the names Śubhākara and Śivakara, and therefore, it is difficult to ascertain which of these was referred to in the Chinese record.

In this regard D.C. Sircar[3] drew attention to the Baud Plates of Pṛthivīmahādevī alias Tribhuvanamahādevī II, dated 158, which mentions that the queen was the daughter of king Svabhāvatuṅga of the Somavaṁśa of Kosala. As the only Somavaṁśi king who had the additional name Svabhāvatuṅga was Mahāśivagupta Yayāti I (c. 970-1000 A.D.), Sircar identifies Pṛthivīmahādevī as the daughter of this king. If this identification is accepted the date of Pṛthivimahādevī has to be fixed in the last quarter of the eleventh century. Assuming that the year

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1. B. Misra, op.cit., p. 76.
2. Age of Imperial Kanauj, 1955, pp. 64-65.
3. I.H.Q. XXIX, 1953, pp. 152 ff.

158 of the Baud grant of Pṛthivīmahādevī, fell within this period, it is possible to calculate that the era used by the Bhauma-karas began at some year between 817-842 A.D.; and their rule must therefore have ended towards the middle of the eleventh century A.D.

A fairly large number of inscriptions found in Orissa and the eastern part of the Madhya Pradesh refer to two separate branches of rulers most of whom had the name-ending Bhañja. One branch ruled in the Khiñjali maṇḍala while the other was in Khijjiñga.[1] According to the Tekkali[2] Plates of Śatrubhañja, the first member of the Khiñjali branch was Yathāsukha, and after him came Mallagambhīra; his son and successor was Śīlabhañja. His successor was Śatrubhañja Maṅgalarāja, the king who issued the Tekkali Grant. From the Kumārakela Grant[3] we learn that Śatrubhañja reigned for at least fifteen years. Śarubhañja was succeeded by his son Raṇabhañja who is called the lord of two Khiñjalis (ubhaya Khiñjali), in his Tasapaikera Grant.[4] His Baud Plate[5] which was issued in his 54th regnal year, gives him the epithet mahārāja. Though Raṇabhañja and his father are both styled 'lord of two Khiñjalis' in their records, this

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1. N.K. Sahu, A History of Orissa, II, 1956, pp. 334-335.
2. Jour. Bihar Res. Soc. XVII, 1931, p. 387 ff. The date of this record according to Banerji is saṁvat 800, but D.C. Sircar thinks it is 14, cf. I.H.Q. XXVIII, 1952, p. 229.
3. Jour. Bihar Or. Res. Soc. II, 1916, p. 435, l. 11.
4. Ibid., p. 174, l. 2.
5. E.I. XII, 1913-1914, pp. 323-325, l. 47.

title is not given to his successors. Another striking difference between the records of Raṇabhañja and those of his successors is that, whereas the records of Raṇabhañja and his predecessors were issued from Dhṛtipura, those of their successors were issued from Vijayavañjuvalaka.[1] These facts clearly suggest that an important change has taken place in the history of this region, which led the successors of Raṇabhañja to leave their original kingdom for ever. It is also important that the Bhañja rulers after Raṇabhañja no longer used the title 'Lord of Khiñjali'. D.C. Sircar[2] believes that the Somavaṁśi kings of Kosala who were growing powerful in the adjoining region, were responsible for ousting the Bhañjas from their original kingdom. He further suggests that, as the available evidence shows, the power of the Somavaṁśis spread to this area only from the days of Mahāśivagupta Yayāti I (c. 970-1000 A.D.), it was Mahāśivagupta who ousted the Bhañjas. If this suggestion is accepted, the rule of the Bhañjas of Khiñjali up to Raṇabhañja has to be placed before 970-1000 A.D.

Raṇabhañja's son Neṭṭabhañja I shifted the capital to Vañjuvalaka; and according to the genealogy given in a grant[3] of Vidyādharabhañja, there were two

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1. Cf. Ganjam Plates of Neṭṭabhañja, edited by R.B. Hiralal, E.I. XVIII, 1925-1926, p. 297, l. 6 and the Orissa Plates of Vidyādharabhañja, ibid., IX, 1907-1908, pp. 275-277, l. 10.

2. Age of Imperial Kanauj, 1955, pp. 147-148.

3. Ganjam Plates of Neṭṭabhañja, E.I. XVIII, 1925-1926, pp. 296-298, ll. 9 ff.

members of this dynasty between Neṭṭabhañja and Vidyādharabhañja. They were Digbhañja and his son Śilābhañja II. However, it is not certain whether they actually ruled. The Jaruda Grant[1] mentions the name of Vidyādharabhañja's son Neṭṭabhañja II, but there is no information about this dynasty after him.

The other major Bhañja family was ruling in northern Orissa in a kingdom known as Khijjiñga, probably comprising the modern districts of Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar.[2] The genealogical lists of this dynasty are given in two copper plates issued by a ruler named Raṇabhañja and his son Rājabhañja. According to these inscriptions, the earliest member of the dynasty was Vīrabhadra, and in his family was born Koṭṭabhañja. The latter is generally regarded as the first historical personage of the dynasty. The successor of Koṭṭabhañja was Digbhañja. His son Raṇabhañja is given the epithet mahārājādhirāja; therefore it is probable that he was the first independent ruler of the family. His Jamidpir Plate[3] is dated 288 of an unnamed era. There is no way to ascertain the era used in this copper plate. If it was the Bhauma-kara era, the date would fall in the first half of the twelfth century.[4] R.C. Majumdar[5] thinks that

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1. E.I. XXIV, 1937-1938, p. 19, l. 6.
2. N.K. Sahu, op.cit., p. 385.
3. J.A.S.B. XL, 1871, p. 166.
4. See supra, p. 68
5. Age of Imperial Kanauj, 1955, p. 75.

this inscription is dated in the Harṣa era, and in that case, the date would be 918 A.D. However, there is no way to fix any definite chronology for this dynasty, as is the case with the Bhauma-karas and the Bhañjas of Khiñjali.

As we saw in an earlier discussion, the rising power of the Somavaṁśi kings of south Kosala posed a threat to the independent kingdoms of Orissa, and the rule of the Bhauma-kara family came to an end probably towards the middle of the eleventh century A.D. According to the Balijhari[1] and the Bhubaneswar[2] Inscriptions of Udyotakeśarī, king Caṇḍīhara Yayāti (c. 1025-1055 A.D.) freed both the rāṣṭras of Kosala and Utkala from the warring chiefs who had occupied those regions. Thus it is clear that apart from Kosala, which was the original seat of power of the Somavaṁśis, Utkala was also included in the dominion of Caṇḍīhara Yayāti. According to the Maranjamura Inscription,[3] Mahāśivagupta III was the lord or Kaliṅga, Kongoda, Utkala and Kosala. If this claim is accepted, it would show that a large part of present Orissa was under this king.

Mahāśivagupta's successor Udyotakeśarī Mahābhavagupta IV (c. 1055-1080 A.D.) also had control over Orissa. This is proved by the Balijhari Charter recording the construction, in his eighteenth regnal year,

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1. Jour. Bihar Res. Soc. XVII, 1931, p. 16, ll. 22-24.
2. J.A.S.B. VII, 1838, p. 558 ff.
3. Jour. Bihar Or. Res. Soc. II, 1916, p. 52, ll. 3-4.

of attemple of Brahmeśvara at Bhubaneswar. Udyotakeśarī appears to be a contemporary of the Eastern Gāṅga monarch Anantavarman Vajrahasta III (1038-1070 A.D.), and the records of the latter's son Rājarāja I (1070-1078 A.D.) claim victory for him over the king of Utkala and Kosala. Rājarāja's son Coḍagaṅga (1078-1147 A.D.) annexed the northern parts of Orissa, thereby bringing the Somavaṁśi rule to an end.[1]

While various minor dynasties were struggling for power in northern Orissa, we hear of the rise of the Eastern Gāṅga dynasty of Kaliṅganagara, the authority of which extended over some parts of southern Orissa. The inscriptions of this dynasty are dated in the Gāṅga era, the beginning of which aroused controversy among scholars. However, most scholars now agree that the Gāṅga era began at a date between 492 and 498 A.D.[2] The Jirjingi Copper Plate[3] of Indravarman of the (Gāṅga) year 39 is the earliest known record of the Eastern Gāṅgas. If we take 498 A.D. as the beginning of the Gāṅga era, it would show that Indravarman was ruling in 537 A.D. The

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1. See infra, p.76

2. R. Subbarao proposes to fix the beginning of the Gāṅga era at a date between 492 and 496 A.D., cf. Jour. Andhra Hist. Res. Soc. V, 1933-1934, pp. 267-276. B.V. Krishna Rao concludes that the Gāṅga era began in 498 A.D., cf. Early Dynasties of Andhradesa, pp. 578-592; D.C. Sircar thinks that it was 496/7 A.D., Indian Epigraphy, 1965, pp. 289-291.

3. Jour. Andhra Hist. Res. Soc. III, 1930-1931, pp. 49-53, edited by B. Subba Rao.

Urlam Inscription[1] of Hastivarman, is the next available record of the dynasty. This charter, dated in the year 80 (578 A.D.), mentions that Hastivarman re-established the family of the Gāṅgas in the whole of Kaliṅga. The fact that he had to re-establish the authority of the family suggests that the dynasty had been temporarily ousted from power. However, little is known about the events that changed the fortunes of the Eastern Gāṅgas immediately before Hastivarman. It is possible that their territory was annexed by the Vigraha family, which also claimed to have ruled Kaliṅga.[2] It is not known whether the Eastern Gāṅgas had to accept the suzerainty of Śaśāṅka, but we know for certain that they continued to rule over Kaliṅga after Hastivarman. Although we have a large number of records of the successors of Hastivarman, they are of little value for the study of the history of the dynasty; therefore, our knowledge about the Eastern Gāṅgas before the time of Anantavarman Vajrahasta III, is almost limited to a mere list of rulers.[3]

After Devendravarman IV whose known date is the (Gāṅga) year 397[4] (895 A.D.), no records of this dynasty are available until the time of Vajrahasta III who ascended

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1. E.I. XVII, 1923-1924, pp. 332-333, l. 1, edited by E. Hultzsch.

2. See supra, p.30

3. For the list of rulers and their dates see Age of Imperial Kanauj, 1955, p. 140.

4. Cheedivalasa Grant, J.A.S.B. letters, XVIII, no. 1, 1952, pp. 79-81, edited by D.C. Sircar.

the throne of Kaliṅganagara in 1038 A.D. During the period between Devendravarman IV and Vajrahasta III, there seem to have been several Gāṅga families ruling in various parts of south Kaliṅga, but their relation to the Eastern Gāṅgas of Kaliṅganagara is obscure.[1]

Although we get the genealogical lists of the predecessors of Vajrahasta III, no other information as to how this branch of the Eastern Gāṅgas rose to prominence in Kaliṅga is lacking. H.C. Ray[2] suggested that the fortunes of this Gāṅga family were connected with the expansion of the Cōḷa influence in Kaliṅga. D. Singh,[3] supporting Ray's hypothesis, argues that Vajrahasta II (c. 981-1016 A.D.), who reunited the Gāṅga kingdoms, was probably a subordinate local ruler of the Cōḷas. This theory is perhaps supported by the absence of any reference to conflicts with Kaliṅga in the inscriptions of the Cōḷas that refer to their northern military expeditions.

Vajrahasta III was succeeded by his son Rājarāja (1070-1078 A.D.).[4] According to the inscriptions of Anantavarman Coḍagaṅga, Rājarāja defeated the Cōḷas and married Rājasundarī, the daughter of the Cōḷa king.[5]

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1. Age of Imperial Kanauj, 1955, p. 140.

2. H.C. Ray, Dynastic History of Northern India, I, 1931, p. 450.

3. D. Singh, The History of the Eastern Gaṅga Dynasty, circa 1038-1238 A.D., unpublished thesis, University of London, 1973, pp. 63-64.

4. Ibid., p. 69.

5. Vizagapatham Plates, Ind. Ant. XVIII, 1888-1889, pp. 166-169, ll. 100-101.

When and why the Cōḷas came into conflict with the Gāṅgas is not quite clear. However, one statement in the Vizagapatam Plates of Coḍagaṅga throws some light on this question. This charter states that 'when Vijayāditya, beginning to grow old, left the country of Veṅgī, as if he were the sun leaving the sky and was about to sink in the great ocean of the Coḍas, Rājarāja of Kaliṅganagara caused him to enjoy prosperity for a long time in the western region'.[1] This is apparently a reference to Gāṅga Rājarāja's intervention in the struggle between the Cōḷas and Vijayāditya, whose daughter was married to the Eastern Gāṅga king. Presumably, Rājarāja came to the help of his father-in-law, and was successful in defeating the Cōḷas. The marriage between Rājarāja and Rājasundarī, the daughter of the Cōḷa king, must have taken place after a reconciliation between the two parties.

Anantavarman Coḍagaṅga (1078-1147 A.D.)[2] succeeded his father to the Eastern Gāṅga throne. Although the Eastern Gāṅgas and the Cōḷas were reconciled in the reign of Rājarāja, the rift seems to have opened again in the reign of Coḍagaṅga. An inscription[3] of the Cōḷa king Kulottuṅga, issued in his 26th regnal year (1096 A.D.), mentions a Cōḷa invasion of Kaliṅga. The records of Kulottuṅga's successor Vikramāditya, also claim that the

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1. Ind. Ant. XVIII, 1888-1889, pp. 166-169, ll. 86-89.
2. D. Singh, op.cit., p. 75.
3. Annual Report South Ind. Epigraphy, no. 304 of 1908; also see no. 463 of 1912.

latter, while still a child, took part in an invasion of Veṅgī-maṇḍala and subdued the 'northern region'.[1] As D. Singh[2] points out, the mention of the conquest of the 'northern region' indicates that the Cōḷas were successful in conquering south Kaliṅga. However, there is definite evidence for another Cōḷa invasion of Kaliṅga. Kulottuṅga's inscriptions mention that the Cōḷa army, having destroyed vast areas, succeeded in subduing the 'seven Kaliṅgas'.[3] Though the literary work Kaliṅgattu-paraṇi claims that after the invasion Kaliṅga became a tributary state of the Cōḷas, most scholars suspect the authenticity of this statement.[4] They are inclined to consider these invasions as mere raids that had no lasting effect on the power of the Gāṅgas.[5]

Coḍagaṅga weathered the Cōḷa invasions and, according to some records that belong to the middle of his reign, had some military successes in the Utkala and Veṅgī regions. His Vizagapatam Plates[6] (date 1118/19 A.D.) state that he replaced the 'fallen lord of Utkala and the waning lord of Veṅgī, restoring their fortunes'. The exact meaning of these claims is not clear, because

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1. S.I.I. III, 1929, p. 184.
2. D. Singh, op.cit., p. 84.
3. S.I.I. IV, 1923, pp. 135-137, no. 445 and Annual Report South Ind. Epigraphy, no. 44 of 1891.
4. D. Singh, op.cit., pp. 86 ff.
5. Cf. D. Singh, op.cit., pp. 85-87.
6. Ind. Ant. XVIII, 1889, pp. 166-169, ll. 101-103.

Veṅgī remained under the Cōḷas until the death of Kulottuṅga in 1117 A.D. and soon after this date Veṅgī was invaded and occupied by the Cālukyas.[1] Nonetheless, there is definite evidence to conclude that Coḍagaṅga conquered at least a part of the Veṅgī kingdom before 1135 A.D., for his Srikakulam inscription[2] (date 1135 A.D.) clearly mentions that Coḍagaṅga annexed the areas lying north of the Godāvarī. The reference to the restoration of the power of the king of Utkala may be taken to mean that Coḍagaṅga forced the king of Utkala to accept his suzerainty. During his long reign of about seventy years Anantavarman Coḍagaṅga was successful in transferring his small inheritance into a strong kingdom that may well be called an empire in the context of contemporary politics.

Coḍagaṅga was succeeded by his eldest son Kāmārṇava, in 1147 A.D.[3] The new king had a short reign of ten years, and the only major political event in his reign was an invasion of his kingdom by the Kalacuris.[4] Kāmārṇava's successor was his brother Rāghava who came to the throne in c. 1156 A.D.[5] According to the Deopara Inscription[6] of Vijayasena of Bengal, the latter defeated

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1. D. Singh, op.cit., pp. 87-89.
2. S.I.I. V, 1933, p. 469, no. 1335.
3. D. Singh, op.cit., p. 98.
4. Cf. Ratnapur Inscription of Pṛthivīdeva II, edited by V.V. Mirashi, E.I. XXVI, 1941-1942, p. 261, v. 16; and D. Singh, op.cit., pp. 99 ff.
5. D. Singh, op.cit., p. 104.
6. E.I. I, 1892, pp. 305-315.

the king of Kaliṅga. Again it mentions that he defeated Rāghava. These two references have been taken to mean that Rāghava suffered a defeat at the hands of the Senas. Though the inscription does not give any reason for this conflict, D. Singh[1] suggests that Vijayasena who had married a princess of the Śūra family of Mandāra, must have come to the help of his relatives against the Gāṅgas who conquered their kingdom in the time of Coḍagaṅga. Vijayasena perhaps tried to take advantage of the change of kings in the Gāṅga kingdom. Rāghava's loss of control over Mandāra is implied by the absence of any reference to Eastern Gāṅga suzerainty over the region in the records of his successors.

Rāghava was succeeded by Rājarāja II, one of his brothers, in 1170 A.D.[2] No information of any major political event of his reign is available. His successor was Aniyaṅkabhīma II (c. 1190/98).[3] He was succeeded by his son Rājarāja III in 1198 A.D.[4] From the Tabaqāt-i-Nāsirī[5] we learn that the first Muslim attempt to invade Orissa was made in his reign. Bakhtyār Khaljī who successfully conquered large parts of Bihar and Bengal, sent two of his generals in 1206 A.D. to attack Jajnagar, before his ill-fated invasion of Tibet. But the Muslim army had to abandon the Orissan invasion and return to Bengal, following Bakhtyār's demise.

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1. D. Singh, op.cit., p. 104.
2. Ibid., p. 107.
3. Ibid., p. 110.
4. Ibid., p. 112.
5. Tabaqāt-i-Nāsirī (English tr.), 1881, p. 573 and p. 560 note 4.

CHAPTER II

ACCUMULATION OF PROPERTY

The making of endowments for religious purposes in India is rooted in a long standing tradition stretching back to a very early period. While the Rg Veda[1] refers to gifts of herd animals given to brāhmaṇas for the performance of religious rituals and other services, these were made in lieu of payment (dakṣiṇā) and hence cannot be termed endowments in the stricter sense. However, the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa[2] enjoins that, when consecrated, kings should make gifts of gold, fields (kṣetra) and cattle to brāhmaṇas. As in this case there is no real payment (dakṣiṇā), we here see a clear deviation from the Vedic practice which was primarily designed to please the gods.

While the above passage in the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa advocates the granting of fields (kṣetra) by the king, another passage in the same work expresses a totally different idea. In the episode of king Viśvakarman, the son of Bhauvana, it is said that, having completely conquered the earth, Viśvakarman was desirous of giving land to his priest Kāśyapa as a sacrificial fee. Then the Earth goddess herself appeared before him and objected: 'No mortal is allowed to give me away (as donation), O Viśvakarmā, thou hast given me, (therefore) I shall plunge into the midst of the sea. In vain was

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1. Rg Veda, I, 126, vv. 1-5; VIII, 18 , vv. 22-25 and 46, v. 22.

2. Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, VIII, 21.

thy promise made to Kāśyapa.'[1] From this it appears that at the time of the compilation of the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, there was a difference of opinion among the brāhmaṇas as to whether it was proper to give away land as donations.

However, this practice seems to have gained recognition by the time of the Upaniṣads, for the Chāndogya Upaniṣad[2] mentions that king Janaśruti, desirous of learning saṁvarga lore,[3] offered, along with other gifts, all the villages in the Mahāvarṣa country to a sage named Raikva. Early Pali literature also speaks of lavish donations by kings and the wealthy members of society to the Buddhist Saṁgha. The Veluvanārāma at Rājagaha was the first ārāma (pleasure-garden) to be offered to the Saṁgha. According to the Mahāvagga,[4] Anāthapiṇḍika, a financier (seṭṭhi) of Sāvatthī, bought some land and built there, at great expense, an āvāsa for monks. Several other ārāmas are also said to have been put at the disposal of the Saṁgha during the lifetime of the Buddha.[5]

It appears that by the time of the epics and the Smṛtis the donation of land had acquired much importance, as it is praised as the most meritorious of all gifts. For instance, the Anuśāsanāparvan of the

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1. Martin Haug (ed. and tr.), The Aitareya Brāhmaṇam of the Rigveda, II, 1863, p. 524.
2. Chāndogya Upaniṣad, IV, 1, 1, 2-5.
3. For the interpretation of saṁvarga lore, see Svāmi Sivananda, (ed. and tr.), Chandogya Upaniṣad, 1965, p. 269.
4. Mahāvagga, II, 1, 7.
5. Ibid., II, 1, 7 ff.

Mahābhārata[1] explains that whatever sin one may have committed, one becomes completely purified by donating even so small an area of land as that equal to a cow-hide (go-carma). This concept of bhūmidāna, formulated by the early law-givers is echoed in a large number of land-grant inscriptions of later times. Most of the stanzas acclaiming the merits of bhūmidāna, are quotations from the Mahābhārata, the Purāṇas or from one of the Smṛtis.[2]

It seems that the practice of making endowments to brāhmaṇas, already attested to from an early period, developed new features with the emergence of the new heterodoxies, particularly Buddhism. The grants that are said to have been made to the Buddhist Saṁgha were not made to individual monks but to the community as a whole. This is clearly different from donations made to individual brāhmaṇas, for the early Buddhist monks had no personal claim over the donations whereas the donations made to brāhmaṇas became their personal property.

The Buddhist monasteries were the first religious institutions in India to receive such donations of economic importance whereas endowments made to Hindu and Jaina establishments are first found only in the inscriptions of the Gupta period.[3] This is mainly because the Buddhist vihāras were the first organized religious

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1. Mahābhārata, Anuśāsanāparvan, 62, 19.

2. I.H.Q. III, 1927, p. 423; C.I.I., p. 119, l. 13; E.I. III, 1894-1895, p. 260, l. 40. Cf. D.C. Sircar, Indian Epigraphy, 1965, pp. 170-201.

3. See infra, pp. 87-88

institutions to come into existence. It is therefore necessary to examine the reasons why the Buddhist Saṁgha, originally a group of wandering ascetics observing strict rules of non-attachment to temporal wealth, came to accept various kinds of gifts of economic value.

As shown above, the earliest known donations to the Saṁgha were either ārāmas or āvāsas, the object of which was to provide shelter for the monks during their retreat in the rainy season (vassāvāsa). During this period monks had to live in a particular āvāsa, the boundaries of which were demarcated according to the Vinaya rules.[1] They were not normally supposed to leave these boundaries during the vassāvāsa,[2] and their daily requirements were looked after by the lay followers. Thus the vassāvāsa gave the Buddhist Saṁgha an opportunity to live together as a settled community for the three months of the rainy season every year.

As long as the Saṁgha continued to consist of wandering ascetics the question of any property other than their few personal movable belongings, could not arise. Hence, the acceptance of property of economic value by the Saṁgha may be closely connected with the change in the life style of the Saṁgha which gradually lost its peripatetic character. How and why this change took place is not very clear. Sukumar Dutt,[3] on certain

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1. Mahāvagga, III, 2, 2.

2. The monks are allowed to go out during the vassāvāsa only under certain specified conditions, and the period of absence should not exceed a fortnight, cf. ibid., III, 2, 2, ff.

3. S. Dutt, Buddhist Monks and Monasteries of India, 1962, pp. 55 ff.

internal evidence of the Vinayapiṭaka, has arrived at the conclusion that, having lived as a community during the vassāvāsa, at least some monks would have continued to live in the same āvāsa during the non-vassa period as well. Further, he draws attention to the term āvāsika (which means monks belonging to an āvāsa) in the Vinayapiṭaka, and argues that alongside the old idea of the Saṁgha of the four quarters, a new concept of the Saṁgha belonging to separate āvāsas also came into existence.[1] The Vinayapiṭaka is believed to be one of the oldest texts of the Pali cannon,[2] hence it may be assumed that from a very early stage at least some monks followed the practice of remaining at the same āvāsa during the non-vassa periods too.

The transition from a wandering to a settled way of life presumably brought about a considerable change in the life of the Buddhist Saṁgha. With the increase in the number of monks living in an āvāsa it would not have been an easy task for a limited number of lay followers to look after the four requisites of the monks throughout the year. As is evident from the large number of cave temples in western India the cost of the excavation, the repairs and the provision of food and clothing for the large number of possible resident monks would seem a task beyond the scope of individual voluntary benefactions.

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1. S. Dutt, Buddhist Monks and Monasteries of India, 1962, p. 57.

2. For a discussion on the date of the Pali canon, see B.C. Law, History of Pāli Literature, 1933, pp. 14 ff.

Meanwhile, the changing attitude of the Saṁgha towards wealth is equally important. According to the Cullavagga[1] one of the ten controversial points placed before the Second Council held at Vaiśālī was whether it was allowable for the monks to accept gold and silver (jātarūpa-rajata-kappo). Although the council rejected all the ten points as contrary to the discipline, the group of monks who advocated the acceptance of gold and silver do not appear to have abandoned this practice. Therefore it is obvious that, at least from the time of the Second Council,[2] there appeared a group of monks who advocated and practised the acceptance of gold and silver.

Thus with the growth of religious institutions, more funds were required for the maintenance of the establishments and to provide the daily requirements of the inmates. With the increase in the number of monks the need for more stable means of income may have been strongly felt. Similarly the changing attitude of Saṁgha towards the acceptance of wealth may also have contributed greatly to the development of the practice of making endowments to Buddhist monasteries.

Although from an early period there is literary evidence for various types of property made over to the Buddhist Saṁgha and to the brāhmaṇas, any inscriptional

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1. Cullavagga, XII, 1, 1 ff. For the translation see I.B. Horner (ed. and tr.), The Book of Discipline, V, 1952, pp. 407 ff.

2. According to the Cullavagga (XII, 1. 1 ff) this council was held 100 years after the death of the Buddha. For a discussion, see M. Hofinger, Étude sur le concile de Vaiśālī, 1946, pp. 183 ff.

evidence for the granting to the Saṁgha of property other than dwelling quarters is available for the first time in the grants of the Kṣaharāta Kṣatrapas of western India. One of the Nasik cave inscriptions[1] of the time of Nahapāna mentions that Usavadāta, the son-in-law of Nahapāna, deposited a sum of money with two guilds of weavers, the interest of which was to be given as clothes money (cīvaraka) and as kuṣana (the meaning of this term is not clear) to twenty monks spending their vassa in the cave donated by him. The inscription further mentions that Usavadāta gave 8,000 stems of coconut trees (datāni nāligerāna mūla sahasrāni aṭha) to the Saṁgha.[2] This may be taken to mean that a coconut grove of 8,000 trees was given in favour of the Saṁgha. Another inscription,[3] also from Nasik, records that Usavadāta, having bought a field for 4,000 kāhapaṇas, gave it to the Saṁgha at the Triraśmi hills.

The Sātavāhana land grants are more elaborate and provide more detailed information than those of the Kṣaharātas; unlike those of the latter some Sātavāhana land grants specifically mention certain privileges and immunities conferred along with the land. A Nasik cave inscription[4] of the time of Vāsiṭhīputa siri Pulamāvi (Vāśiṣṭhīputra śrī Pulamāvi) mentions that the king granted

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1. E.I. VIII, 1905-1906, p. 82, ll. 2-6.
2. Ibid., ll. 7 ff.
3. Ibid., p. 78, l. 4.
4. Ibid., p. 65, ll. 12-13.

a village called Sāmalīpada in the Govadhana āhāra[1] to the Saṁgha of the Badhāyanīya sect,[2] along with bhikhuhala-parihāra,[3] and the grant has been declared an akṣayanīvī.[4] Further, the inscription clarifies the immunities one by one, viz. not to be entered (by royal officials), not to be dug for salt, not to be interfered with by the district police, (in short) to enjoy all kinds of immunities (savajāta-parihāra). Some other Sātavāhana grants which were more or less contemporary with those of the Kṣaharātas, without specifying all the details, only mention that all the immunities were granted.[5] The most important aspect of these grants is the transfer of certain rights over the land, previously enjoyed by the king. The royal officers, and even the district police (raṭa-savinayika) were barred from entering such land. Thus it is evident that the donees had, at least in theory, the full freedom to enjoy the land they were endowed with.

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1. An administrative division.

2. For a discussion on this see J. Hettiarachchy, History of Buddhism in Northern Deccan (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1975), pp. 139 ff.

3. The term bhikhuhala-parihāra (i.e. bhikkhuhala) may be translated as immunities applying to monks' land. There is no mention of this term in inscriptions other than those of the Sātavāhanas, nor do the literary sources refer to this or to a similar term. It may be assumed that this term was used to denote the conventional set of immunities and privileges granted along with the land to Buddhist institutions.

4. For the interpretation of akṣayanīvī, see infra, pp.149-152

5. E.I. VIII, p. 60, ll. 11 ff.

It appears that the practice of making endowments to religious establishments became widespread in

It appears that the practice of making endowments to religious establishments became widespread in

northern India under the Imperial Guptas. The Chinese pilgrim of the fifth century A.D. describes the practice prevalent at the time:

> 'Right from the days of the Buddha, the kings, elders and the gentry of the countries round about, built shrines for making offering to the priests and gave them land, houses, gardens with men and bullocks for cultivation. Binding title deeds were written out, and subsequent kings have handed down to one another without daring to disregard them, in unbroken succession to this day.' [1]

Fa-hsien refers only to those grants made to the Buddhist Saṁgha, but the inscriptions of the period record such donations made not only to the Buddhist monasteries but to the institutions of other religions as well. The Sañchi Stone Inscription[2] of the time of Candra Gupta II, records the donation of some land in the village of Īśvaravāsaka by an official of king Candra Gupta, called Āmrakārdava to the āryasaṁgha (the congregation of Buddhist monks) at a vihāra at Kākanādaboṭa. The Bhitari Pillar Inscription[3] of Skanda Gupta records the endowment of a village to the god Viṣṇu. Again the Indore Copper Plate[4] of Skanda Gupta states that a brāhmaṇa named Devaviṣṇu of Candrāpura deposited an unspecified amount of money with

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1. H.A. Giles, Travels of Fa-hsien, 1923, pp. 21-22.
2. C.I.I. III, p. 52, ll. 17-19.
3. Ibid., p. 54, ll. 17-18.
4. D.C. Sircar, Select Inscriptions, 1942, p. 319, ll. 4 ff.

a guild of oilmen, and the interest accruing to the deposit was to be used for the maintenance of lamp for the Sun god. The Gunaighar Inscription[1] records that king Vainya Gupta endowed some land to the mahāyāna-saṁgha at the request of one of his sāmantas, mahārāja Rudradatta.

As in the case of the land grants, it is in the inscriptions of the Kṣaharāta Kṣatrapas that we come across the earliest references to monetary endowments to religious establishments. According to a Nasik cave inscription,[2] Usavadāta deposited 3,000 kahāpaṇas with two guilds of weavers, stipulating that the interest of this sum was to be given to 20 monks spending their vassa in the cave, as their cīvaraka and kuṣana.[3] Another inscription from Nasik, dated in the ninth regnal year of king Īśvarasena, mentions that sums of 1000 and 500 kahāpaṇas were deposited by a certain lady named Śakānī, with two guilds of kulārikas and odayantrikas respectively, for the provision of medicine for the sick among the Saṁgha dwelling in a cave there. On both these occasions the money was deposited with guilds of artisans and the interest was used to meet the requisites of the Saṁgha.

In eastern India, inscriptions recording grants in favour of religious institutions are available only

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1. D.C. Sircar, Select Inscriptions, 1942, pp. 340-345, ll. 3 ff.

2. E.I. VIII, p. 82, ll. 2-6.

3. See supra, p. 85

from the Gupta period, but the practice soon seems to have become widespread. As is evident from the inscriptions as well as the literary sources, there was a considerable variety in the types of property granted to religious bodies. Yet the majority of these endowments consisted of land grants ranging from small plots to vast areas covering several villages. And it appears that institutions such as the Nālandā mahāvihāra had hundreds of villages under their control. Hiuen-Tsang[1] who spent several years at Nālandā, mentions that, at the time of his visit, the mahāvihāra owned 100 villages. The number of villages seems to have increased considerably during the following decades, for by the time of I-tsing who came to Nālandā a few decades later, the monastery had 200 villages under its control.[2] Even after leaving a margin for possible exaggeration in these statements they remain a good example of the extent of land held by at least some of the religious establishments in eastern India.

The inscriptions of the period under review reveal that there were different categories of land assigned to religious bodies. Of these, the majority of the inscriptions record the assignment of single villages. In the Copper Plate of Lokavigraha[3] (599/600 A.D.) from Kanas, Orissa, the village of Ūrddhvaśṛṅga in the Utiḍa

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1. S. Beal, Life of Hiuen-Tsang, pp. 112-113.
2. J. Takakusu, Record of Buddhist Religion, p. 65.
3. E.I. XXVIII, 1949-1950, p. 331, ll. 4 ff.

or Mutida visaya of southern Tosalī, was given by some royal officers of the said visaya to a matha of Maṇināgabhaṭṭāraka. The Bhagalpur Plate[1] of Nārāyaṇapāla also records the grant by the king of a village called Makuṭikā to a temple of Śiva at Kalasapota. The Arma Inscription[2] (c. 1157 A.D.) of Madanapāla's time, mentions that a village called Khaṇḍapāṭaka was granted in favour of a Buddhist monastery bySārthadevikā, the wife of mahāmaṇḍalika Jakṣapāla (Yakṣapāla).

There are certain instances where several villages were granted in a single charter. The Khalimpur Plate[3] informs us that king Dharmapāla granted four villages at the request of mahāsāmanta Nārāyaṇavarman, to a temple of god Nannanārāyaṇa. King Devapāla donated the villages of Pālāmaka, Nandivānaka, Maṇivāṭaka, Naṭikā and Hastigrāma to a monastery at Nālandā.[4] The area of land donated by king Śrī Candra, in the Paschimbhag Copper Plate, to nine mathas covered the entire visayas of Garalā, Pogāra and Candrapura and also a tract called Aveḍikā in the Sātalavargga in the Śrīhaṭṭa maṇḍala belonging to the Pauṇḍravardhma bhukti.[5]

A number of land grant inscriptions record the

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1. Ind. Ant. XV, 1886, pp. 305 ff., vv. 17 ff.
2. E.I. XXXVI, 1965-1966, pp. 43-44, ll. 1-12.
3. E.I. IV, 1896-1897, pp. 247-251, vv. 12 ff.
4. Ibid., XVII, 1923-1924, pp. 318-324, ll. 33-37.
5. Ibid., XXXVII, 1968, pp. 301-304, ll. 27-28.

donation of single plots or several plots of land. The Copper Plate of king Bhavadeva[1] of Devaparvata mentions that a royal officer called Vibhūtidāsa granted seven and a half pāṭakas of land to a Buddhist monastery at Veṇḍamati. According to an inscription[2] (c. tenth century A.D.) at the Baripada museum, Orissa, three tracts of land situated in the village of Nemigrāma, were granted in favour of the goddess Durgā by a king whose name ends in Bhañja. The Khilor Inscription[3] of the time of Anantavarman Coḍagaṅga, speaks of a donation by a certain Paḍālukāṭama of a plot of land called Pokhataṭa to a temple of Śiva at Khilor.

The Tippera Copper Plate of Lokanātha (c. 650 A.D.) is the only inscription from the period under review that records the donation of forest land. It states that the king, at the request of one of his mahāsāmantas, granted some forest land (aṭavibhūkhaṇḍa) having no distinct boundaries, to the deity Anantanārāyaṇa.[4]

During this period, a few inscriptions record some money endowments made to religious institutions. According to the Mundesvari hill Inscription[5] of Udayasena (c. 650 A.D.) a certain kulapati[6] named Bhāguḍalaṇa,

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1. J.A.S.B. Letters, XVII, no. 2, 1951, p. 94, ll. 56 ff.
2. E.I. XXXIII, 1959-1960, p. 86, ll. 1-3.
3. Ibid., XXV, 1963-1964, p. 129, ll. 6-7.
4. Ibid., XV, 1919-1920, p. 307, ll. 21-25.
5. Ibid., IX, 1907-1908, pp. 289-290, ll. 6-15.
6. Kulapati literally means 'head or a chief of a family' (M. Williams, Sanskrit-English Dictionary, s.v.).

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having erected a matha near the temple of Vinīteśvara, made an endowment of 50 dīnāras to the temple for the provision of two prasthas of rice every day for the votive offering and a pala of oil for a lamp. A Bhubaneswar Inscription[1] (1142 A.D.) states that prince Pramāḍi, a younger brother of king Anantavarman Coḍagaṅga, deposited five gold māḍhas with the inhabitants of the village of Nāgagarbhā headed by the pradhāni (chief) Saṇḍa; the villagers were responsible for the payment of a pāda[2] per month as interest on the deposit for the provision of oil for a lamp the prince had donated to the temple of god Kedāreśvara. The Gayā Inscription,[3] dated in the gatarājya of Govindapāla (date 1175 A.D.), mentions that a certain brāhmaṇa deposited 50 karṣāpaṇas with a maṭha of Gadādhara at Gayā, for feeding some brāhmaṇas at the maṭha.

Houses and house sites were another important type of property the religious establishments received as

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Footnote 6 continued from previous page.

However, R.D. Banerji, on the strength of the Vācaspatyābhidāna, translates it as 'a teacher who maintains ten thousand pupils at his own cost' (E.I. IX, 1907-1908, p. 289, n. 4). It may be pointed out that according to ancient Cambodian inscriptions kulapati was the person who directed the internal management of temples and hermitages. See M.K. Sharma, Studies in Sanskrit Inscriptions of Ancient Cambodia, 1974, p. 273.

1. E.I. XXX, 1953-1954, p. 94, ll. 4 ff.

2. For a detailed discussion see infra, pp. 169-170

3. E.I. XXXV, 1963-1964, pp. 237-238, vv. 1-2.

donations. I-tsing[1] mentions that houses were one of the items of property owned by some monks. The Bhatera Copper Plate of Govindakeśava[2] (1049 A.D.) records that the king granted 296 houses in various villages in the Sylhet area to a temple of Śiva at Bhaṭṭāpāṭaka. The inscription gives a list of names of the occupants of those houses, which includes washermen, barbers, boatmen and bell-metal workers. The very fact that these houses were owned by a number of people shows it was not the ownership of the houses that was transferred to the temple. Therefore it may be assumed that only the right to collect taxes from these houses - a right previously enjoyed by the king - was transferred. However, from the Ahar Inscription[3] (Bulandshahr, U.P.) we learn how a religious establishment, using its funds, bought the lease of several houses with a view to utilizing the rent for religious purposes.[4]

Apart from these, there were several other types of donations which constituted the property of religious institutions. A considerable number of inscriptions record the installation of perpetual lamps, images etc.[5] There is no doubt that at least some of

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1. J. Takakusu, Record of Buddhist Religion, p. 189.
2. E.I. XIX, 1927-1928, pp. 277 ff., ll. 19 ff.
3. Ibid., pp. 58-62, documents 2, 4, 6, 8, 10.
4. For a further discussion see infra, pp. 176
5. See Appendix.

these items were made of valuable metals and decorated with precious stones and pearls. The Tabaqāt-i-Nāsirī[1] in describing a temple in Kamrud (Kāmarūpa), mentions that in the temple there were a number of images of gold and silver, and one particular idol was so large that it weighed more than 300 mans of gold. The Nālandā Inscription of Vipulaśrīmitra[2] states that Vipulaśrīmitra's donation to the Somapura mahāvihāra included a valuable gold ornament (hemābharana). The Mera Viṣṇu Temple Inscription[3] (Gaya dist. Bihar) refers to ornaments donates to the temple. The Deopara Inscription[4] (c. 1110 A.D.) also describes how king Vijayasena of Bengal decorated an image of the god Śiva with emeralds, sapphires and pearls. He also presented a golden jar to the deity.

Livestock was another important item of property the religious institutions received as endowments. South Indian Inscriptions reveal that certain Cōḷa temples had become major centres for the redistribution of live-stock in the area.[5] As we saw earlier, Fa-hsien[6] refers to the practice of granting land and bullocks to the Buddhist monasteries. I-tsing,[7] too, mentions that the

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1. H.G. Raverty (tr.), Tabaqāt-i-Nāsirī, 1897, p. 569.
2. E.I. XXI, 1931-1932, pp. 98-99, vv. 7-10.
3. Jour. Bihar Res. Soc. LII, 1966, pp. 63-65, ll. 5 ff.
4. E.I. I, 1892, pp. 307-311, v. 31.
5. See infra, p. 175
6. H.A. Giles, Travels of Fa-hsien, pp. 21-22.
7. J. Takakusu, Record of Buddhist Religion, p. 61.

Buddhist monasteries had to provide bulls to the peasants who cultivated monastic land. However, very few inscriptions from eastern India refer to the donation of livestock to religious institutions. The Mera Viṣṇu Temple Inscription[1] (1175 A.D.) from Bihar mentions that a certain brāhmaṇa named Haridravarman donated an unspecified number of cows to the temple of Viṣṇu. An inscription[2] from the Nīleśvara temple, Orissa, records the donation of a perpetual lamp and some she-buffaloes to the temple of Bhaṭeśvara.

Both literary and inscriptional sources refer to the donation of servants and dancing girls to religious foundations. I-tsing[3] mentions that kings of different periods supplied some boy servants to temples to watch and announce the time. The Deopara Inscription[4] of Vijayasena records the donation of 100 women to a temple of Śiva. The Bhubaneswar Inscription[5] of Bhaṭṭabhavadeva (c. 1200 A.D.) also mentions that Bhaṭṭabhavadeva donated 100 girls to the god Harimada (Viṣṇu). According to the Bhatera Copper Plate[6] (1049 A.D.), king Govindakeśava is said to have given hundreds of parijanas to the god Śiva. It is quite possible that at least some persons thus given

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1. Jour. Bihar Res. Soc. LII, 1966, pp. 63-65, l. 4 ff.
2. S.I.I. III, X, 1948, p. 375, inscription no. 721.
3. J. Takakusu, op.cit., p. 44.
4. E.I. I, 1892, pp. 307-311, v. 30.
5. S.K. Maity and R.R. Mukherji, Corpus of Bengal Inscriptions, 1965, p. 353, v. 30.
6. E.I. XIX, 1927-1928, pp. 279 ff., ll. 28 ff.

to religious foundations were either slaves or had been in the service of the donors.[1] In fact, the Agni Purāṇa[2] enjoins that religious institutions should be granted land, cattle, elephants, horses and slaves.

The donation to religious foundations were sometimes made merely for the increase of the religious merit of the donors, but most inscriptions specify the purpose for which the endowments were made. Several endowments were made for the provision for bali, caru and sattra to a deity, whereas in other cases the donations were meant for a single purpose such as pūjā or naivedya. The Kailan Copper Plate[3] of Śrīdhāraṇa Rāta of Samatata (c. 650 A.D.) speaks of a donation of a tract of land for the provision of food and clothing to the monks at a Buddhist monastery, probably at a place called Rañkupottaka. In the Nālandā Copper Plate[4] of Devapāla, five villages were assigned to a monastery within the mahāvihāra for the provision of oblations, offerings, shelter, garments, alms, beds, medicines and other requisites of the monks (bali-caru-sattra-cīvara-piṇḍapāta-sayanāsana-glānapratya-bhisajyādyārtha).

The Plate of Lokavigraha[5] (599/600 A.D.) which

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1. For a discussion on the social status of these people see, infra, pp. 255 ff.
2. Agni Purāṇa, 211, 72.
3. I.H.Q. XXIII, 1947, p. 239, ll. 21 ff.
4. E.I. XVII, 1923-1924, p. 322, ll. 37-42.
5. Ibid., XVIII, 1949-1950, p. 331, ll. 9 ff.

records the grant of the village Ūrddhvaśṛṅga in southern Tosalī, states that the donation was for the maintenance of the brāhmaṇa students of the Maitrāyaṇīya branch of the Yajurveda, who were residing at the maṭha of Maṇināgabhaṭṭāraka. The purpose of the grant recorded in the Bhagalpur Plate[1] of Nārāyaṇapāla was to provide food, shelter and medicine, etc., for the Pāśupata ascetics at a Śaiva establishment at Kalasapota. The Gayā Inscription[2] dated in the gatarājya of king Govindapāla, informs us that a brāhmaṇa named Vidyādhara donated fifty karṣāpaṇas to the maṭha of Gadādhara for feeding the resident brāhmaṇas of the maṭha.

In certain cases donations were made for the purpose of writing religious texts. The Kailan Plate[3] of Śrīdhāraṇa Rāta speaks of the donation of a tract of land measuring four and a half pāṭakas to a Buddhist monastery for the worship of the Buddha, provision of the requisites of the monks as well as for the writing and reading of Buddhist texts. One of the objects of the endowment mentioned in the Nālandā Plate of Devapāla was the writing of Buddhist texts.[4]

The construction of new buildings and the maintenance of the existing buildings of the religious

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1. Ind. Ant. XV, 1886, pp. 305 ff., vv. 17 ff.
2. E.I. XXXV, 1963-1964, p. 238, ll. 5 ff.
3. I.H.Q. XXIII, 1947, p. 239, ll. 23 ff.
4. E.I. XVII, 1923-1924, pp. 321-322, ll. 33-37.

establishments required substantial amounts of funds. Some patrons who constructed the establishments took the pain to endow them with some means of income for the maintenance of buildings. Thus the Khalimpur Plate of Dharmapāla[1] mentions that one of the objects of the endowment of four villages to the temple of Nannanārāyaṇa was the maintenance of its buildings. The Nālandā Copper Plate of Devapāla, too, mentions that the endowment recorded in the inscription was also for the maintenance of buildings of the monastery built by the ruler of Suvarṇadvīpa.[2] The Hindol Plate of Śubhākara[3] (c. middle of the tenth century A.D.), also records a donation to a temple of Vaidyanātha at Yuvāgulopāṭikā, one of the purposes of which was to provide for the maintenance of the buildings of the establishment.

The making of endowments for the maintenance of perpetual lamps at temples seems to have gained wide popularity in eastern India, particularly during the second half of the period under consideration. For, a considerable number of inscriptions of this period record various types of arrangements made for the maintenance of akhaṇḍadīpas or chāyādīpas. Thus the Mangraon Inscription[4] of the time of Viṣṇu Gupta mentions that a

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1. E.I. IV, 1896-1897, pp. 247-251, vv. 12 ff.
2. Ibid., XVII, 1923-1924, pp. 321-322, ll. 33-37.
3. Jour. Bihar Res. Soc. XIV, 1928, pp. 77-80, ll. 12 ff.
4. E.I. XXVI, 1941-1942, p. 246, ll. 3 ff.

certain Avimuktajja made arrangements (most probably by depositing some money with the village assembly) to purchase every day one pala of oil from the inhabitants of the village of Aṅgāra for the maintenance of a perpetual lamp at the temple of the god Subhadreśvara. King Anantavarman Coḍagaṅga donated the village of Devadharmaśrī to the Liṅgarāja temple at Bhubaneswar for the maintenance of a perpetual lamp.[1] According to a Puri Inscription[2] of the time of Coḍagaṅga three pūjāhāris created a monetary endowment for the provision of 200 measures of oil every month for a lamp at the Mārkāṇḍeśvara temple at Puri.

Alms-houses (sattra or sattra-maṇḍapa) were a common feature of most of the ancient Indian religious foundations, hence the maintenance of sattra was one of the objects of many endowments. For instance, the Narasapalli Plates of Hastivarman[3] (c. 577 A.D.) mentions that six halas of land and two houses (niveśana) granted to the temple of Nārāyaṇa at the village of Rohaṇa were made for several purposes including the maintenance of sattra. The maintenance of sattra was one of the objects of the grant of the village of Ūrddhvaśṛṅga, as recorded in the Copper Plate of Lokavigraha[4] of Orissa. The

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1. Orissa Hist. Res. Jour. I, 1952, no. 2, p. 8, ll. 2 ff.
2. E.I. XXXIII, 1959-1960, pp. 184-185, ll. 3 ff.
3. Ibid., XXIII, 1935-1936, pp. 65-66, ll. 9 ff.
4. Ibid., XXVIII, 1949-1950, p. 331, l. 13.

Bhagalpur Plate[1] of Nārāyaṇapāla mentions that the king granted the village of Makuṭikā to the temple of Śiva for several purposes including the maintenance of sattra.

There are instances where donations were made not to a particular institution, but to certain individuals attached to these foundations. Hiuen-Tsang[2] mentions that king Pūrṇavarman of Magadha (a contemporary of Harṣa) assigned the revenue of 20 large towns to support a Buddhist monk named Jayasena. The same monk was endowed with the revenue of another 80 large towns in Orissa by the emperor Harṣavardhana.[3] Harṣa also offered 10,000 pieces of gold, 30,000 pieces of silver (probably coins) and 100 garments to Hiuen-Tsang.[4] A land measuring five timpīras was granted by the wife of king Mānabhīta of Orissa (second half of the seventh century A.D.) to an ekasāṭa (most probably a Jaina monk).[5] The Janibhiga Inscription[6] (early thirteenth century), also recording a similar donation, mentions that the village of Koṭṭhalā was granted by king Jayasena of Magadha, to a Buddhist monk named Maṁgalasvāmin.

The manner in which the practice of making donations to individual monks, instead of to institutions,

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1. Ind. Ant. XV, 1886, pp. 305-307, v. 6 ff.
2. S. Beal, Life of Hiuen-Tsang, p. 153.
3. Ibid., p. 154.
4. Ibid.
5. E.I. XXIX, 1951-1952, p. 43, ll. 44 ff.
6. Jour. Bihar Or. Res. Soc. IV, 1918, p. 279, ll. 2 ff.

originated is not clear. As mentioned above, neither the Buddhist Saṅgha nor the Jaina monks were allowed to accept or to own private property, and the rejection of wealth was the very basis of the life of the pavajitas. But in the course of time, as a result of numerous changes that took place in the life of these two religious orders, private possession of property may have come into existence. Perhaps the donations made to individual brāhmaṇas who formed the Hindu priestly class also influenced the introduction of the practice of making donations to individual monks.

The making of endowments to individuals associated with religious foundations was entirely a new development, as it was completely different from a donation made in favour of a deity or to a community of monks. When the endowment was for the enjoyment of an entire community or was in the name of a deity the priests or individual monks had no direct personal claim over such property. It was to be treated as the property of the institution. But a grant made to an individual associated with a religious body, would have become the property of the person concerned.

It is evident that, by the second half of the seventh century A.D., ownership of private property by individual Buddhist monks in India had become a well established practice. I-tsing gives a long account of various types of property which were in the possession of individual Buddhist monks. In describing the arrangements to be made by the congregation for the disposal of the

property belonging to monks who had died, he mentions:

> 'The property [of the deceased] must be distributed in accordance with the law. Any property remaining must be suitably divided ... The following is the specification: Land, houses, shops, bedgear, woollen sheets and iron or copper implements, leather, bedding, shaving things, male and female servants, liquor, food, corn ... are to be made the property of the priests assembling from every quarter ... Quadrupeds, elephants, horses, mules, asses for riding are to be offered to the royal household. Bulls and sheep could not be distributed, but belong to the whole assembly; gold, silver, wrought or unwrought goods, shells (cowree, kapardaka) and coins are to be divided into three portions for the Buddha, Dharma and the Saṅgha.' [1]

Though it is not certain whether this statement applies equally to the monks of all sects and in every part of India, it seems probable that this was the practice among some Buddhist monks, at least of eastern India where I-tsing himself lived and travelled for some time. And what is more important in this statement is the fact that it reveals what types of property Buddhist monks of I-tsing's time could hold in their possession. At least some of them owned valuable assets such as land, cattle, elephants, shops and houses; and some of them even possessed male and female servants. In a latter part of the above mentioned account, I-tsing[2] refers to documents relating to contracts and deeds in the possession of the deceased monks. This clearly indicates that at least

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1. J. Takakusu, Record of Buddhist Religion, pp. 189-191.
2. Ibid., p. 192.

some monks had much wider business interests.[1] It is quite probable that the annual distribution of excess income of the Buddhist monasteries in India, a practice referred to by both Fa-hsien and I-tsing,[2] also have encouraged the monks to own private property.

The many donations which the religious institutions received came from people belonging to various strata and sections of society. The great majority of the grants came from the kings and the other members of the royalty. The village of Śvetabālikā was granted by king Gopacandra of Bengal (second half of the sixth century A.D.) to a Buddhist monastery at Bodhipadraka.[3] King Indravarman of the Gāṅga dynasty of Orissa (end of the sixth century A.D.) gave three halas of land in the villages of Haribhaṭa and Dantayavāguru to the deity Rāmeśvarabhaṭṭāraka at Dantayavāguru.[4] From the Deo-Baranark Inscription[5] we learn that king Jīvita Gupta II (first half of the eighth century A.D.) donated the village of Varuṇikā to a temple of the Sun god (Varuṇavāsībhaṭṭāraka). According to the Paschimbhag Copper Plate[6] King Śrī Candra of Bengal (first half of the

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1. For a further discussion on this subject see infra, pp. 177-178

2. See infra, p. 271

3. Jayarampur Copper Plate of Gopacandra, Annual Report on Indian Epigraphy, 1964/1965, p. 48.

4. Santabommali Plates of Indravarman, E.I. XXV, 1939-1940, pp. 197-198.

5. C.I.I. III, pp. 216-217.

6. E.I. XXXVII, 1968, pp. 301-304.

tenth century A.D.) donated an area of land covering three administrative divisions (visayas) in the Śrāhaṭṭa maṇḍala, to nine mathas. King Anantavarman Coḍagaṅga of Orissa granted the village of Devadharmaśrī to god Kṛttivāsas for the maintenance of a perpetual lamp.[1]

However, when compared with the large number of endowments made by the kings, a relatively small number of donations made by the other members of the royalty are available.[2] The Ashrafpur Copper Plate[3] records the transfer of several tracts of land measuring six pāṭakas and ten droṇas to several Buddhist monasteries, a donation made by the crown-prince Rājarāja, the son of king Devakhaḍga. From the Haṁseśvara Temple Inscription,[4] Jajpur, Orissa, we learn of a donation of a market (probably the market dues) placed by queen Mādhavadevī, wife of Śubhākara I, to a Śiva temple. Mahādevī Vijyā (Vidyā), wife of king Raṇabhañja, donated the village of Vihāravāḍa in the Khiñjali maṇḍala to a temple of Śiva.[5] In the Bhubaneswar Inscription[6] of Pramādi, prince Pramādi, the younger brother of king Anantavarman Coḍagaṅga made a monetary endowment to a temple of the deity Kedāreśvara

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1. Liṅgarāja Temple Inscription of Anantavarman Coḍagaṅga, Orissa Hist. Res. Jour. I, 1952, no. 2, p. 8.

2. See Appendix.

3. M.A.S.B. V, no. 1, 1905, pp. 90-91.

4. E.I. XXVIII, 1949-1950, p. 193.

5. Patna Museum Plate of Raṇabhañja, ibid., XX, 1929-1930, pp. 101-104.

6. Ibid., XXX, 1953-1954, p. 94.

for the maintenance of a perpetual lamp. An inscription[1] of the time of Aniyaṁkabhīma (c. 1200 A.D.) mentions that Svapneśvara, the brother-in-law of king Rājarāja, made several endowments to a temple of god Megheśvara.

There is evidence for a number of donations made by various royal officials. The mahāpratihāra Bhānudatta (c. 624 A.D.) granted the village of Kumvukīrikṣilāka in the Uttamāvaloka viṣaya to the maṭha of Maṇināgabhaṭṭāraka.[2] According to the Bhaturiya Inscription[3] of Rājyapāla, one of his ministers (mantrin) who was also an army commander (tantrādhikārin) named Yaśodāsa, having obtained the king's permission, granted the village of Madhuśrava to a Śiva temple. A certain mahāsandhivigrahika (minister of peace and war) named Jayanātha, in the service of king Śrīdhāraṇa Rāta of Samataṭa, donated a tract of land measuring four and half pāṭakas to a Buddhist monastery.[4] The Alagum Inscription[5] of Anantavarman Coḍagaṅga mentions that a certain disāpati (provincial administrator) named Kāmāṇḍi made a donation consisting of a hala of land and a sum of 105 purāṇas to a maṭha of Gartteśvara at Alagumma. The village of Ūrddhvaśṛṅga in southern Tosalī was given

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1. E.I. VI, 1900-1901.
2. The Grant of Bhānudatta, ibid., XXVIII, p. 344.
3. Ibid., E.I. XXXIII, 1959-1960, pp. 153-154.
4. Kailan Plate of Śrīdhāraṇa Rāta, I.H.Q. XXIII, 1947, pp. 237-241, ll. 20 ff.
5. E.I. XXIX, 1951-1952, pp. 47-48, ll. 2 ff.

by some royal officers (viniyuktakas), including, for instance, the vaiśvāsika, viṣayapati and aṁśabṛhadbhogika, to a matha of Maṇināgabhaṭṭāraka.[1]

The number of donations known to have been made by those other than the members of royal families and the royal officials, is relatively small. In this category can be included certain individuals associated with religious institutions. For instance, a Buddhist monk named Vipulaśrīmitra built a temple of Tārā at Somapura and offered it several donations including a valuable gold ornament.[2] The Mundeśvarī Hill inscription[3] mentions that a certain kulapati[4] (head of an educational institution) named Bhāguḍalaṇa, having erected a matha near a temple of Vinīteśvara, deposited 50 dīnāras with the temple for the daily provision of rice for votive offering and oil for a lamp. According to the Puri Inscription[5] of the time of Anantavarman Coḍagaṅga, three pūjāhāris named Hari, Vandau and Vāsu deposited some unspecified amount of money with a financier (śreṣṭhin) called Jīvanta for the provision of 200 measures of oil every month for a perpetual lamp at the temple of Mārkāṇḍeśvara. In the Bhubaneswar Inscription[6] of the

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1. E.I. XXVIII, 1949-1950, p. 331, ll. 4 ff. Plate of Lokavigraha.
2. Nālandā Inscription of Vipulaśrīmitra, ibid., XXI, 1931-1932, p. 99, ll. 8 ff.
3. Ibid., IX, 1907-1908, pp. 289-290, ll. 3 ff.
4. For the interpretation of this term see supra, p. 91
5. E.I. XXXIII, 1959-1960, pp. 84, 85, ll. 3 ff.
6. Ibid., XXXV, 1963-1964, p. 119, ll. 3 ff.

time of Rājarāja (1172 A.D.) an ascetic (tapodhana) named Bālakācchoṭika deposited five gold mādhas with a group of merchants for the maintenance of a perpetual lamp at the Liṅgarāja temple. A brāhmaṇa who was an incense-burner (guggulin) at a temple of Gadādhara at Gayā, made an endowment of 50 karṣāpaṇas to feed the resident brāhmaṇas at a maṭha attached to the temple.[1]

There are a few donations made by people belonging to other social groups and engaged in other occupations. Though there are references to merchants and financiers in the inscriptions and literary sources, only one inscription of the period under review records a donation by merchants. The Sonepur Plate[2] of Mahābhavagupta II (Bolangir district, Orissa), records the donation by a certain merchants' guild or a merchants' association known as the Kamalavāhana vanik-sthāna, the village of Goṭṭaikelā to two temples of Viṣṇu and Āditya.

An inscription[3] at Mahābodhi (end of the eighth century A.D.) mentions that a person named Keśava who is described as a son of a sculptor, constructed a lake at the cost of 3,000 drammas for the use of the Buddhist monks at Mahābodhi. From the above discussion it is clear that the number of donations made by the members of the royal family and government officials was considerably higher than that of the other groups. Particularly the

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1. Gayā Inscription dated in the gatarājya of Govindapāla, E.I. XXXV, 1963-1964, p. 238, ll. 5 ff.

2. Ibid., XXVIII, 1949-1950, pp. 250-254, ll. 22-25.

3. S.K. Maity and R.R. Mukherji, Corpus of Bengal Inscriptions, 1965, p. 112, ll. 2 ff.

kings could not only make lavish donations of money and land, but they could also transfer the rights they enjoyed over certain areas of land.[1]

The religieux, by virtue of the large amounts of benefactions they received, were in turn able to make endowments to religious institutions. In the previous periods, from the time of the Buddha and Mahāvīra, the mercantile community was well known for their lavish donations to religious bodies. Curiously enough, during the period under review the contribution of the merchants seems to have been very limited. This becomes the more striking if we take into consideration the large number of endowments made by the mercantile community to religious institutions during the Kṣaharāta Kṣatrapa-Sātavāhana period.[2] It may be assumed that as a result of the marked decline in trade in the period under review, the mercantile community was not large enough or powerful enough to make significant contributions to pious activities.

The endowments made for religious purposes were considered to be perpetual, and the confiscation or withdrawal of such property was condemned. Most of the inscriptions recording donations to religious institutions or to brāhmaṇas include some conventional stanzas describing

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1. See infra, pp. 144-146

2. For a discussion on this subject see J. Hettiarachchy, History of Buddhism in Northern Deccan (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of London), 1973, pp. 155 ff.

the merit acquired by making and preserving pious donations, and the great sin that will come upon anyone violating the rights of the donee.[1] The inclusion of such stanzas in the inscriptions suggests that there was a real anxiety felt by the donors lest their gifts might be made undone by some later generations - particularly future rulers.

However, there is some literary and epigraphic evidence to suggest that the inviolability of the property of religious institutions was not always honoured. The Arthaśāstra,[2] which prescribes heavy punishment for the theft of property of gods recommends, on the other hand, that in replenishing the treasury kings should order the devatādhyakṣa to bring all temple property together in one place and secretly appropriate them for the state, declaring at the same time that they were either looted or burnt down. Even the prince in disfavour is advised to appropriate temple property for strengthening his resources in his attempt to overthrow an unjust king.[3] As R.P. Kangle[4] has rightly pointed out, this attitude of Kauṭilya towards property of religious institutions is quite foreign to the tradition represented in the Dharmaśāstras.

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1. Cf. Copper Plate of Bhavadeva of Devaparvata, J.A.S.B. Letters, XVII, 1951, p. 94, ll. 60 ff: Hindol Plate of Śubhākara, Jour. Bihar Or. Res. Soc. XVI, 1930, pp. 78-79, ll. 26-31.

2. Arthaśāstra, V, 2, 37-38.

3. Ibid., I, 18, 9.

4. R.P. Kangle, Kauṭalīya Arthaśāstra (a study), III, p. 158.

Although we have no clear cases of the withdrawal or confiscation of religious property from eastern India there is some evidence from other parts of India to this effect. The Rājataraṅgiṇī records at least two instances of the violation of the sanctity of the property of religious institutions. King Harṣa of Kashmir plundered temples in his kingdom to strengthen the state treasury.[1] And king Saṁkaravarman (c. 833-892 A.D.) also deprived temples of their property in order to replenish his depleted treasury.[2]

From south India and Sri Lanka, too, we hear of a few cases of the plunder of religious institutions or the confiscation of their property. In the protracted struggle between the Cōḷas and the Western Cālukyas, the Cōḷa army is said to have plundered temples and murdered brāhmaṇas.[3] According to the Pāli chronicles of Sri Lanka, monastic property was plundered by Kuñcanāga (c. 187-189 A.D.) and Dāṭhopatissa (c. 639-650 A.D.), in order to raise funds in their bids to capture the throne. Then again, massive scale confiscation of monastic property is reported in the reign of Vikkamabāhu in early twelfth century A.D.[4] And Kāliṅga Māgha who invaded the island in 1236 A.D. is also said to have carried out

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1. Rājataraṅgiṇī, VII, 1088.
2. Ibid., V, 168-170.
3. K. Nilakantha Sastri, The Cōḷas, I, 1955, pp. 311.
4. Cūḷavaṁsa, 44, 131-34; also see R.A.L.H. Gunawardhana, History of the Buddhist Saṅgha in Ceylon (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of London), 1965, pp. 126 ff.

an indiscriminate campaign of spoliation of monastic property.[1]

As there are only a few cases of withdrawal or confiscation of religious property it seems likely that the inviolability of the property or religious establishments was generally honoured. Therefore, the wealth accumulated in religious institutions was relatively safe from the greed of the rulers. By virtue of this privileged position many religious foundations of the period had become major centres for the concentration of wealth, and they were, in most instances, the largest property owners of the area.

1. Cf. A. Liyanagamage, The Decline of Polonnaruva and the Rise of Dambadeniya, 1968, pp. 110-112.

CHAPTER III

LANDED PROPERTY

As seen in the preceding chapter, the religious establishments of eastern India, like their counterparts of other areas of the subcontinent, came to control vast areas of land during the period under review. As the majority of endowments consisted of land-grants, landed property was by far the most important source of income of the religious institutions. In most instances, land was granted along with several kinds of immunities and privileges, and the donation was perpetual.

The authority to transfer various types of privileges and immunities was solely vested with the king himself. Therefore, when a person other than the king desired to make a religious grant the usual procedure was to make a request to the ruler to get the land declared tax-free. Some influential persons who could approach the ruler himself made their requests personally. For instance, as recorded in the Kailan Copper Plate[1] of king Bhavadeva of Devaparvata (second half of the eighth century A.D.), mahāsāmanta Nandadhara himself requested the king to make an endowment of a tract of land free of taxes, to a Buddhist monastery at Vendamati. But in most cases the usual procedure was to make the request to the

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1. J.A.S.B. (Letters), XVII, no.2, 1951, p.94, ll. 53 ff.

king through a dūtaka or an influential intermediary. From the Khalimpur Plate[1] of Dharmapāla (c. 781-821 A.D.) we learn that when mahāsāmanta Nārāyaṇavarman was desirous of making a land grant to a temple of Nannāārāyaṇa, the request was made through the crown-prince Tribhuvanapāla.

In some instances, the donor had to make a payment to the state treasury in order to get the land he intended to donate free from taxes. According to the Bhaturiya Inscription[2] of Rājyapāla (c. 920-952 A.D.), one of the king's officials (tantrādhikārin = army commander) named Yaśodāsa, having built a temple for Siva, requested the king to grant the village of Madhusrava to this temple. The inscription does not provide any details of the transfer, but mentions that the grant was made by the king after the tantrādhikārin had paid an amount of one hundred purāṇas as nikara. It is not clear from the context what exactly was meant by nikara. Monier Williams[3] takes it to mean a suitable gift or an amount which is legitimately payable. D.C. Sircar,[4] editing the inscription, translated it as an amount which is legitimately payable to the king. Then, in a separate discussion[5] on the creation of tax-free religious endowments, he pointed out that when a small amount of tax was fixed for a gift land, it was often designated by some term other than kara, such as tṛṇodaka agrahāra-pradeyāṁśa etc.,[6] which may suggest that nikara is

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1. E.I., IV, 1896-1897, pp.247-251, ll. 31 ff.
2. E.I. XXXIII, 1959-1960, pp.153-154, ll. 16-17.
3. Monier Williams, Sanskrit-English Dict., s.v.
4. E.I. XXXIII, 1959-1960, pp.152-153.
5. I.H.Q. XXXIV, 1958, pp.279-280.
6. Cf. J.R.A.S. XVIII, 1952, pp.4 ff. and E.I. XXX, 1953-1954, pp.114-115.

used in a similar sense in the Bhaturiya Inscription. From the present inscription it is apparent that nikara denotes the amount of one hundred purāṇas that was paid to the king. Therefore it may be assumed that Yaśodāsa had to make that payment in order to get his donation declared free from taxes and other burdens; and the payment was probably to compensate for the loss of revenue suffered by the state as a consequence of the religious endowment.

In this connection it is relevant to examine whether all those who made such requests to the king had to make similar payments to obtain his consent. In certain cases where the king announced the proclamation of a tax-free holding at the request of someone else it is also mentioned that one-sixth of the merit arising from the donation will accrue to the king.[1] This one-sixth seems to have been the normal share of income due to the state for land. According to Kauṭilya,[2] when Manu was elected the first king, he was allotted one-sixth of the grain grown. The Manusmṛti[3] also prescribes one-sixth of the crop as the king's share. As the king lost this share whenever some land was made tax-free, he would, in theory, be entitled to enjoy one-sixth of the merit arising from the endowment.

However, the fact that the king is entitled to one-sixth of the merit is not mentioned in a large number of religious land grants made by the kings at the request of someone else. D.C. Sircar[4] is of the opinion that some of these grants, though containing no reference to the making of

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1. Cf. Mallasarul Copper Plate of Gopacandra, E.I. XXIII, 1935-1936, p.160, l.11
2. Arthaśāstra, I, 13, 5-7.
3. Manu, VII, 30 also see Hindu Rev. System, pp. 25 ff.
4. E.I. XXXIII, 1959-1960, p.50.

payments, were actually based on transactions involving the sale of land. In support of this argument he cites the Nalanda Copper Plate of Devapāla, according to which king Devapāla granted five villages as a tax-free holding to a monastery at Nālandā at the request of Bālaputradeva, king of Suvarnabhūmi.[1] Sircar argues that the five villages were apparently purchased by Bālaputra from Devapāla, as otherwise the whole of the religious merit accruing from the making of the donation would go to Devapāla and nothing at all to Bālaputra. He further writes: 'This was no doubt an undesirable position for the king of Sumatra, if he really purchased the villages as he no doubt did, five-sixth of the merit would be his and only one-sixth would go to Devapāla according to convention'.[2] This mere supposition from which he attempts to draw conclusions, is in no way supported by the contents of the inscription. The record does not say that the donation was for the increase of religious merit of the king of Suvarnabhūmi; instead it states very clearly that king Devapāla donated the villages in question 'for the increase of the spiritual glory of his parents and himself' (mayā mātāpitror=ātmanaś=ca puṇya-yaśo-'bhivṛddhaye).[3] If Devapāla received any payment for making the tax-free holding, theoretically, he would not be entitled to any merit accruing from the endowment. Thus it is quite clear that it was not Bālaputra's intention to acquire merit by making a donation of villages, but to ensure a permanent source of income for the maintenance of the buildings and provisions for the inmates of the monastery he

1. Ibid. XVII, 1923-1924, pp.321-122, ll.35 ff.

2. E.I. XXXIII, 1959-1960, p.50.

3. Ibid. XVII, 1923-1924, p.322, ll.37-38.

erected. He had already performed an act of merit by constructing the monastery. Therefore there could be no question of a financial transaction in the grant recorded in the Nālandā Copper Plate.

There is no positive evidence, however, to suppose that the donees of all the religious endowments had to make payments to the state treasury in order to obtain king's sanction to get the land tax-free. Members of the royal family and some influential royal officials who enjoyed tax-free land holdings, would no doubt have got their religious grants declared tax-free, without making a payment to the state. As far as the theoretical position regarding tax-free religious endowments is concerned, the king would not acquire any merit if he received payment for the donation.

There were certain general procedures to be followed in the issuing of land grants, and some ceremonies to be observed before a donation was completed. The contents of the grants were to be communicated to various royal officials, village elders, to the brāhmaṇas as well as to the cultivators and other inhabitants of the village.[1] The address to the royal officials and to the villagers was an essential part of a grant because, on one hand, it ensured that no injustice was suffered by the villagers as a consequence of the transaction, on the other hand, the text of the grant was the official announcement of the endowment; and the villagers had to be informed of any changes concerning the authority over the villages. Moreover, the royal officials were required to see that no injustice or disturbance would be caused to the donees

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1. Cf. Khalimpur Inscription of Dharmapāla, E.I. IV, 1896-1897, pp.247-251, ll. 30 ff. Bhagalpur Copper Plate of Nārāyanapāla, Ind. Ant. XV, 1886, pp.305 ff. ll. 27 ff. Hindol Plate of Subhākara, Jour. Bihar. Res. Soc. XVI, 1930, pp. 69 ff. ll. 15 ff.

in their enjoyment of the grant. Also, they had to ensure that the grant was enjoyed by the donees in accordance with the conditions laid down in the document. Accordingly, the grant was not only the royal announcement of the endowment but also an official order decreed upon the government officials and the villagers concerned.

As the donation of villages together with immunities and privileges had been a well established practice by the period under review, in most cases these privileges are explicitly mentioned and some of the terms are reiterated in an almost uniform manner in inscriptions of all the regions under consideration. Because of the stereotyped nature of the expressions relating to the privileges and immunities in these inscriptions it is difficult to examine how far the land tenure and the rights of the beneficiaries of different regions varied from each other and in different periods. Hence, any study of these immunities and privileges is bound to be limited to a general discussion.

It is from the time of the Pālas that this customary set of expressions became a very common feature of the land-grants of eastern India. The Khalimpur Plate [1] of Dharmapāla stipulates that four villages were granted to a temple of Nannanārāyaṇa, each with all their areas up to the boundaries, exempt from all molestation and in accordance with the rule of bhūmicchidra. In the Nālandā Copper Plate[2] of Devapāla,

1. E.I. IV, 1896-1897, p.243 l. 53. svasīmā-paryantāḥ s-oddeśaḥ sadaśāpacāraḥ a-kiñcit-pragrāhyāḥ parihṛta-sarvva-pīḍāḥ bhūmicchidra-nyāyena candr—ārkakṣiti-samakālaṁ.

2. E.I. XVII, 192-1924, pp.32-322, ll.34-36. sva-sīmā-tṛṇa-yūti-gocaraparyantāḥ sa-talāḥ s-oddeśāḥ s-āmra-madhukāḥ sa-jala-sthalāḥ s-oparikarāḥ sa-daśāparādhāḥ sa-cauroddharaṇāḥ parihṛta-sarvva-pīḍāḥ a-cāṭa-bhaṭa-praveśā a-kiñcit-pragrāhyā rājakuliya-samasta-pratyāya-sametā buhūmicchidranyāyen= ācandrarkkakṣiti-samakalaṁ.

five villages were granted to a monastery at Nālandā, up to their boundaries, together with grass and pasture land, low lands and high lands, with mango and madhūka trees, with their water and dry lands, uparikara, deśāparādha, caurod-dharaṇa, free from all molestation, exempt from the entry of the cāṭas and bhaṭas, having taken nothing (from the donees), with all kinds of revenue due to the royal household, according to the law of bhūmicchidra to last as long as the Moon, the Sun and the Earth endure. This set of expressions is found, sometimes with slight changes or with some additions, in most of the land grants of all areas of eastern India. These terms have been discussed by various scholars who have proposed different interpretations for them. Yet, as most of these interpretations are not very convincing or satisfactory, a fresh examination of these terms is essential for the proper understanding of the land system and the rights of the religious institutions over the land under their control.

N.G. Majumdar[1] translated the term parihṛta-sarva-pīḍāḥ as 'exempt from all kinds of forced labour'.[2] It is quite possible that compulsory labour or viṣṭi was one of the forms of oppression, but the term refers quite clearly to all kinds of oppression, not to one particular type of it. Kielhorn[3] takes parihṛta-sarva-pīḍāḥ to mean 'free from all

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1. N.G. Majumdar, Inscriptions of Bengal, III, 1929, III, p.24 and p.66.

2. A better translation of the term viṣṭi would be compulsory labour. For a discussion also see infra, p. 260

3. E.I. IV, 1896-1897, p.254.

molestation and oppression.' Although this term is frequently mentioned in the land grants of eastern India it offers little help for a proper understanding of its real meaning. However, some Assamese land grants throw some valuable light on this problem. The Nowgong Copper Plate[1] of Balavarman III of Assam, forbids the entry of such persons as princes, queens, rāṇakas, rājavallabhas, grand or aged ladies (probably of the king's harem), those in charge of the fastening of elephants and boats, those responsible for pitching royal camps and other royal officials like cauroddharaṇika, dāṇḍapāśika and auparikara to the donated village.

Some other grants of Assam are more precise on this point and provide detailed information on various kinds of interference the villagers had been forced to tolerate. The Bargaon,[2] Gauhati,[3] Gaukuchi[4] and Subhankarapataka[5] inscriptions mention that land was granted free from all obligations connected with the fastening of elephants and boats, the realization of uparikara[6] and cauroddharaṇa[7] as well as the

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1. J.A.S.B. LXVI, 1897, pp.291-292, third plate ll. 1-2, rājñī-rajaputra-rāṇaka-rājavallabha-mahallaka-proḍhika-hastibandhika-naukābandhika-cauroddharaṇika-dāṇḍika-dāṇḍapāśika-auparikara.....ādyupadrava-kāriṇām= apraveśā.
2. J.A.S.B. LXVI, pt.1 1897, pp.99 ff. ll. 57-58.
3. Ibid., pp.113 ff. plate 2, ll. 10-11.
4. Kāmarūpa-śāsanāvali, pp.130 ff. ll. 39-41.
5. Ibid., pp.146 ff., ll. 36-38.
6. See infra, p. 132
7. See infra, p. 136

pasturing of horses, camels, buffaloes and sheep. Most probably when members of the royal family and royal officials were touring the country they fastened their beasts of burden and boats and pitched their camps anywhere they liked. They presumably, had to be fed and lodged by the villagers. Such practices no doubt often caused considerable hardship to the villagers.

The term acāṭa-bhaṭa-praveśāḥ indicates that the granted land was forbidden to all those called cāṭa and bhaṭa. Monier Williams[1] translates cāṭa as a 'rogue'. Bṛhaspati[2] mentions this term in the description of theives. In a commentary on Yājñavalkya, Vijñāneśvara[3] explains that cāṭa means a pratāraka or a cheat who derpived others of their property by taking them into confidence. According to the Harṣacarita[4] the cāṭas were notorious for their criminal acts or misdeeds (aparādha). However, it is very unlikely that the cāṭas were mere rogues or thieves as such, for they are mentioned in the records along with royal officials. They might well have been a kind of tax-farmers who obtained from the king the right to collect certain taxes in a semi-official capacity. Unfortunately our sources are of little help in determining the exact position of the cāṭas in relation to the village administration. Nonetheless, it is clear that all the above authorities are unanimous on the point that the cāṭas were a group of people who caused much hardship to villagers and were notorious for their misconduct.

1. Sanskrit-English Dictionary (1889), p.391.
2. Quoted in the Vīramitrodya, VII (Vyavahāraprakāśa), Chowkhamba Sanskrit series, Benares, 1929, p.332.
3. Mitākṣarā on Yājnavalkya, 1. 335.
4. Harṣacarita, (trans.) p.212.

The word bhaṭa normally means a 'soldier', but D.C. Sircar,[1] on the basis of two Orissan inscriptions, translates it as 'combatant chiefs'. The Balijhari Inscription[2] of Udyotakeśari says that king Yayāti Mahāśivagupta of Kosala liberated the rāṣṭras of Kosala and Utkala which had been seized by certain bhaṭas. The Bhubaneswar Inscription of Udyotakeśrai,[3] too, refers to some bhaṭas who devastated the whole rāṣṭra of Kosala, after the death of the Somavaṁśi king Dharmaratha (first half of the eleventh century). It should be noted, however, that bhaṭa in the context of these inscriptions may mean either combatant chiefs or soldiers in general. The Harṣacarita[4] mentions that bhaṭas, while marching through villages, even in the company of their king, often damaged the ripe crops of the peasants. Hence, it is evident that the behaviour of both cāṭas and bhaṭas caused much inconvenience and suffering to villagers. Therefore the kings, when making donations, were strict in preventing the cāṭas and bhaṭas from entering such land in order to enable the donees to enjoy their demesne free from outside interference.

The interpretation of the term bhūmicchidranyāya has been a matter of much discussion among scholars writing on the land system of early medieval India. A literal translation of the term would be 'the rule of holes in the earth'. R.G.Bhandarkar,[5] taking into consideration this

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1. Orissa Hist. Res. Journal, I, 1952, p.292.
2. I.H.Q. XXII, 1946, p.300, and Jour. Bihar. Or. Res. Soc. XVII, 1931, pp.15 ff.
3. J.A.S.B. (letters), XIII, pp.63 ff.
4. Harṣacarita, (tr.) pp. 181-182.
5. Ind. Ant. I, 1872, p.46, note 1.

literal meaning, thought that 'a grant is to last long as the Sun, the Moon etc., shall endure on the principle of bhūmicchidra, that is, as holes in the earth are filled up in time and so unchanged, so a grant should survive all revolutions etc., and last unchanged for ever'. G. Bühler,[1] elaborating Bhandarkar's interpretation, argued that bhūmicchidra means 'the reasoning from the familiar instance of the ground and the clefts therein, or the inference that the whole includes the parts, just as a piece of land includes the various clefts therein. If it is stated in grants that a village or the like is given bhūmicchidranyāyana, it means simply that it is made over with all its appurtenances, produce, rights etc.' . Both these interpretations are purely conjectural and are not based on any positive evidence. Besides, if Bhandarkar's interpretation is accepted, one has to understand that this term was used in the grants to indicate that they were perpetual. Then it is difficult to understand why these grants also have a phrase mentioning that they shall last as long as the Moon, the Sun and the Earth endure.

In this connexion it may be noted that the Arthaśāstra contains a chapter entitled bhūmicchidravidhānam, which deals mainly with non-agricultural land. Though Shamasastry,[2] who first edited the text, read this term as bhūmicchidravidhānam, Kangle,[3] following a manuscript found in Patna, thinks

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1. Ibid., IV, 1875, p.106.

2. R. Shamasastry, (ed.) Arthaśāstra, II, 2.

3. R.P. Kangle (ed. & tr.) The Kautilīya Arthaśāstra, Bombay, 1972, vol.II, p.59. However, it may be noted here that both bhūmicchidravidhānanyāya and bhūmicchidrāpidhānanyāya are found in the inscriptions of the period under consideration. Cf. B. Misra, Orissa Under Bhauma Kings, pp. 41 ff, ll. 24-25, E.I. XXIX, 1951-1952, pp.120 ff, l.28, ibid., XXIV, 1937-1938, p.19, l. 12.

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that the correct reading should be bhūmicchidrāpidhānam where apidhāna gives the meaning of covering. In this chapter Kauṭilya enjoins that the king should allot the land that is unsuitable for agriculture, as pasture for cattle or grant it to brāhmaṇas for soma plantation and for the study of the Vedas.[1] Thus it is clear from Kauṭilya's clarification that bhūmicchidra land was uncultivated waste land. The Vaijayantī[2] also gives a similar meaning to bhūmicchidra when it says that bhūmicchidra lands are those unfit for cultivation (bhūmiścidraṁ-kṛṣi-ayogyā). L.D. Barnet,[3] accepting the interpretations of Yādava and Kauṭilya, concluded that bhūmicchidranyāya means the condition under which peasants were allowed to settle on wild land, though the king reserved the right to eject the grantee. But it is very unlikely that in the case of the grants of the period under review, the kings retained the right to eject the donee, for these are very emphatic on the point that the grants were perpetual and that the donees should not be deprived of enjoying the grant.

D.C. Sircar,[4] also, taking into consideration the explanations given in the Arthaśāstra and in the Vaijayantī translates bhūmicchidranyāya as 'the maxim of the waste land' and further explains that a person bringing such land under cultivation was entitled to enjoy it without paying taxes. He goes on to say that chidra was also understood in the sense

1. Kangle, op.cit., p.59, II, 2, 1.
2. Vaijayantī, 1, 227.
3. E.I. II, 1894-1895, p.353.
4. D.C. Sircar, Landlordism and Tenancy, p.5.

of a 'hole', 'am opening' or 'a gap', and therefore the same principle is mentioned in some cases as bhūmicchidrāpidhānanyāya, 'the maxim of covering up bhūmicchidra'. Since a plot of waste land could be regarded as a gap in the cultivated area and the reclamation of such land might be technically known as 'covering up the gap'. Thus in his opinion both bhūmicchidranyāya and bhūmicchidrāpidhānanyāya were used to indicate the same rule.

If the explanation given in the Arthaśāstra is accepted, as has been done by Sircar, bhūmicchidra land has to be considered land that is not taxable, because it does not produce a reasonable income. It is also important that Yādavaprakāśa, too, defined this type of land as unsuitable for cultivation (kṛṣy-ayogya). The Kamauli Plate of Vaidyadeva of Assam (first half of the twelfth century A.D.), also throws some light on this problem. It says that no tax should be levied from bhūmicchidra land (bhūmicchidrañ-ca-akiñcit-kara-grāhyam).[1] This reference clearly shows that the original idea found in the Arthaśāstra, viz. that waste land should not be taxed, was still prevalent as late as the twelfth century.

From the foregoing discussion it would have become clear that all the above mentioned scholars who attempted to explain the bhūmicchidranyāya agree, on one way or another, on the point that bhūmicchidra land was waste land unsuitable for agriculture. Yet they failed to notice that all the lands that were granted according to the bhūmicchidranyāya, in the period under consideration, were productive. For instance, the Bhagalpur Plate[2] of Nārāyaṇapāla, which records the

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1. E.I. II, 1894, p.353, l.51.

2. Ind. Ant. XV, 1886, p.306, ll. 41ff.

donation of the village of Makuṭikā according to bhūmicchidra-nyāya, mentions that the village had grass and pasture land (tṛṇayuti-gocara), plain land and mango and madhūka trees. The inscription further informs us that to which uparikara, daśāparādha and cauroddharaṇa and all kinds of revenue the king was entitled were also transferred along with the village. The Vajrayogini Plates[1] of Sāmalavarman (twelfth century A.D.), which records the donation of some land (probably a village) according to bhūmicchidranyāya, also mention that in addition to various taxes and other revenue, (rights over) coconut, arecanut and panasā trees were transferred to the donee. Thus it is clear that these lands, though they were granted according to the bhūmicchidranyāya, had already been under cultivation, by the time of their donation. Hence, the theory that it was uncultivable waste land is not acceptable.

At this stage it is worth mentioning that U.N.Ghoshal[2], though not discussing bhūmicchidranyāya in detail, thought that 'it implied the grant of full right of ownership such as would be acquired by a person making fallow land cultivable for the first time'. Although it is not certain that those who brought uncultivated land under the plough for the first time, would acquire 'full rights of ownership' or, if not, what particular rights they were entitled to, it may be assumed that the bhūmicchidranyāya was made use of when cultivated land was being donated, because certain privileges and rights could be made over only under the provisions of this rule.

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1. E.I. XXX, 1953-1954, p.263, ll. 4 ff.

2. Hindu Rev. Syst. p.212, f.n. 4.

Apart from pasture grounds, low and high lands, dry and habitable lands, some grants mention different other natural resources which were placed at the disposal of the donees. The Katra (North Bihar) grant[1] of Jīva Gupta (first half of the eighth century A.D.) mentions that three villages were granted together with their salt and metal mines (sa-loha-lavaṇ-ākarāḥ). Even today Bihar is well known for its metal mines, and this was no doubt an important source of income. Salt was a valuable commodity in the ancient world and, particularly in areas far from the sea, salt mines would have been of immense importance. Some other grants include rights over nidhi and upanidhi.[2] It is not quite clear from the inscriptions what was precisely meant by these two terms. Some scholars[3] have taken nidhi to mean treasure troves, and upanidhi as deposits or accumulations on the soil. This may be taken to mean hidden treasures and deposits as well.[4] Hence, it may be argued that various kinds of valuable deposits, including salt and metal mines, were meant by nidhi and upanidhi.

Perhaps the most important right the donees of the land grants enjoyed was that to receive different types of taxes and other dues from the villagers. Various scholars have brought foreward different interpretations for these fiscal terms and for most of the terms there are no agreed interpretations. Even the validity of some non-controversial interpretations, too, may be questioned on the ground of possible regional variations in their meanings.

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1. E.I. XXXV, 1963-1964, p. 129, l.12.
2. Sonepur Plate of Mahābhavagupta Janamejaya, E.I. XXIII, 1935-1936, p.251, l. 16.
3. D.C. Sircar, Landlordism and Tenancy, p.52.
4. M. Williams, Sanskrit-English Dictionary (1899) p.164 and p.481.

Several land grants from Bihar and Bengal stipulate that the donees were entitled to bhāga-bhoga-kara-hiraṇya from the donated villages.[1] Scholars like Kielhorn and U.N. Ghoshal considered this as a single term and thus interpreted as the king's share in the produce of land.[2] But A.S. Altekar[3] preferred to take it as a compound of different terms and explained bhāgakara as land tax and bhogakara as various other minor taxes which were paid in kind to the king, but in practice enjoyed by the local royal officials. A.N. Bose[4] also takes bhāga and bhoga as two different terms and interprets bhāga as the king's share in grain and bhoga as the same as bali in early times. Yet, in some early inscriptions bali and bhāga have been used to denote two different taxes. The Rummindei Pillar Inscription[5] of Aśoka mentions that, having visited Lumbinīgrāma (the place where the Buddha was born), the king declared the village free from the payment of bali, and reduced bhāga to one-eighth (ubalike kaṭe aṭha-bhāgiyeca). The Junagadh Inscription[6] of Rudradāman also makes a clear distinction between bali and bhāga by mentioning the two terms separately. However, the later Indian inscriptions do not mention the term bali. According to D.C. Sircar,[7] the gradual disappearance of this term from the later inscriptions can only be explained by assuming that bhoga came into use in place of bali. Hence, he proposes to take bhāga as the

1. Bhagalpur Plate of Nārāyaṇapāla, Ind. Ant. XV, 1886, p.306, l. 42. E.I. XVII, 1923-1924, p.322, l. 42.
2. E.I. XVII, 1923-1924, p.16 and Hindu Rev. Syst. p.214.
3. Altekar, Rāshtrakūṭas and their times, pp.214-216.
4. Social and Rural Economy of Northern India, Calcutta, 1942, vol.I, pp.121.
5. Select Inscriptions, 1965, p.67, ll. 4-5.
6. Ibid., p.179, l. 14 yathāvat prāptair bali-śulka-bhāgaḥ.
7. Landlordism and Tenancy, p.15.

usual royal share in produce and bhoga as the periodical offerings such as fruit, flowers, firewood and the like.

The Arthaśāstra[1] also makes a distinction between bhāga and bali when it speaks of ṣaḍbhāga and balikara. Apparently in this instance, bhāga meant the king's share in produce generally, but not always, amounting to one-sixth. Again, the Arthaśāstra uses the word bhāga to signify the meanings share or tax as in compounds such as lavaṇabhāga[2] (share in salt or salt-tax) and udakabhāga[3] (share in water or water-tax). Evidently therefore, in these places, the Arthaśāstra uses the word bhāga in its general meaning of share or tax, which could be specified by the addition of another word.

One important problem, however, is to decide whether any interpretation given to these terms in the early sources can be used to explain those found in later inscriptions. This poses special problems when the meanings given in some contemporary lexicons are considered. Both the Amarakoṣa[4] and the Vaijayantīkoṣa[5] explain bali, bhāga and kara as common terms for land-tax. Further, in some land grants both bhāga and bhoga are completely dropped and only kara is mentioned together with hiraṇya.[6] This apparently means that kara was used to signify the land-tax in general. Yet it does not explain the precise implications of the entire compound of bhāgabhogakarahiraṇya. In this case, both bhāga and bhoga are used along with kara, and therefore it cannot be explained as merely land-tax. Hence a further explanation is required.

1. Arthaśāstra, II, 6, 3 and II, 15, 5.
2. Ibid., II, 12, 28.
3. Ibid., II, 12, 27.
4. Amarakoṣa, 8, 28.
5. Vaijayantī, 3, 7, 89 (p.107).
6. Ramganj Copper Plate of Īsvaraghoṣa, Ins. Beng. III, pp.149-157, v.5, l. 27.

In the Manudharmaśāstra,[1] kara has sometimes been used to indicate tax in general, but various commentators on the work have suggested different interpretations for it. Medhātithi interprets it as a gift of commodities such as fruit, grain etc., while Nārāyaṇa takes it to mean the land-tax paid in money. Kullūka and Rāghavānanda explain it as 'monthly taxes or taxes paid in certain months by the villagers'.[2] From these references it is clear that authorities of later times were not unanimous on the meaning of kara. This, in turn, implies that though kara meant tax in general, it could also have been used at different times and in different areas to signify various types of taxes. Perhaps in some of the inscriptions it was used to denote a land-tax, and sometimes the usual grain-share of the king. But when it was used in the compound bhāgabhogakarahiraṇya, kara, presumably, indicated a periodical tax collected in addition to the grain-share.

The term hiraṇya which is usually found along with bhāgabhoga, literally means 'gold', 'cash' or 'wealth'.[3] Kielhorn,[4] accepting this general meaning translated hiraṇya as a payment in money. Beni Prasad,[5] however, took it as a tax on gold mines. But it is very unlikely that there were so many gold mines in ancient or medieval India; therefore it is highly improbably that hiraṇya was a tax levied on gold mines. N.C. Bandyopadhyaya[6] held that hiraṇya was a tax on hoards or on capital or an annual income. Yet, U.N. Ghoshal,[7]

1. Manu. VIII, 307.
2. The Laws of Manu, S.B.E. XXV, p.307, note on 307.
3. M. Williams, Sanskrit-English Dictionary (1889) p.1299.
4. E.I. VII, 1902-1903, p.61.
5. Beni Prasad, State in Ancient India, Allahabad, 1928, p.302.
6. N.C. Bandyopadhyaya, Economic life and Progress in Ancient India, 1945, vol.I, pp.139-140.
7. Hindu Rev. Syst. pp. 61-62.

rejecting this supposition, argues that it is 'extremely improbable for a state like that contemplated in the Smṛtis to draw parts of its normal revenue from gold, whether we understand by it a tax on the accumulated hoards of metal or a tax on the income estimated in gold currency'. He further mentions that, though most of the land revenue was assessed in kind, there were certain other classes of crops which were always assessed in cash on the ground that it was very difficult to divide them into shares. Therefore, Ghoshal believes that, hiranya was a tax which was levied on certain special kinds of crops as distinguished from the tax in kind which was charged upon the ordinary crops.

When turning to inscriptions, it is striking that the entire compound bhāgabhogakarahiranya sometimes appears with slight changes, such as rājabhogakarahiranya;[1] and in certain cases a completely new term takes its place. For example, the Katra Plate[2] of Jīva Gupta (first half of the eighth century A.D.) has the expression samasta-rājapratyāya in place of bhāgabhogakarahiranya of other inscriptions. The new term samasta-rājapratyāya apparently means all kinds of revenue due to the king and rājabhoga also has a similar meaning. Hence, it may be assumed that, although these terms might have denoted some particular taxes, they were sometimes used in a conventional manner so as to indicate the usual grain-share and other taxes which were payable to the state.

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1. Vajrayogini Plate of Sāmalavarman (early twelfth century A.D.), E.I. XXX, p. 263, l. 6.

2. Ibid., XXXV, 1963-1964, p.129, ll. 12-13.

In the Khalimpur Plate of Dharmapāla,[1] the term piṇḍaka appears in the place where the expression bhāgabhogakarahiraṇya in other inscriptions occurs. The inscription, recording the king's order mentions that the villagers should pay all the customary dues such as kara and piṇḍaka (samucita-kara-piṇḍakādi-sarvva-pratyāya) to the donees, i.e. the temple of Nannanārāyaṇa. Kielhorn[2] who edited the inscription, identified piṇḍaka with bhāgabhogakara of other inscriptions. U.N. Ghoshal[3] compares it with piṇḍakara in the Arthaśāstra[4] and draws attention to the interpretation provided to it by Bhaṭṭasvāmin. According to Bhaṭṭasvāmin[5] piṇḍakara was a tax received from village as a whole. Accepting this interpretation, Ghoshal thinks that piṇḍakara stands for hiraṇya in other inscriptions. The Madhuban Copper Plate of Harṣavardhana, also mentions piṇḍa, but in a slightly different form. It declares that the donee of the grant is entitled to the piṇḍa collected from the viṣaya (viṣayād uddhṛta-piṇḍa).[6] If piṇḍa can be identified with piṇḍakara, it would follow that viṣayād uddhṛta-piṇḍa in the Madhuban Copper Plate indicates a tax collected from the viṣaya as a whole. A large number of post-Pāla grants - some grants of the Senas in particular - testify to the prevalence of the practice of assessing the annual revenue of villages in terms of cash. It is noteworthy that piṇḍaka can also

1. E.I. IV, 1896-1897, p.250, l. 55.
2. Ibid., p.259, f.n. 7.
3. Hindu Rev. Syst. pp. 244-245.
4. Arthaśāstra, II, 15, 3.
5. Ibid. (Shamasastry's tr.) p.140, f.n.3, and also see ibid. Kangle's tr.) II, p.122, note on II, 15, 3.
6. E.I. I, 1892, p.73, l. 11.

be translated as 'lump-sum tax'. If it could be taken as the same as pindakara of the Arthasāstra, it may be explained as an assessed annual income collected from villages or from visaya as a whole, over and above the other taxes.

Uparikara is a very common revenue term found in the land grants of this period and also those of the Gupta period. It sometimes occurs along with another revenue term known as udraṅga.[1] Fleet[2] equated uparikara with the Marathi word upari or upri, and on this basis gave the interpretation: 'A tax levied on cultivators who had no proprietary rights on the soil'. G. Bühler[3] believed that udraṅga was connected with uddhāra which is explained in the Śāsvatakoṣa as the share of produce collected usually for the king. U.N. Ghoshal,[4] on the other hand, elaborating Bühler's explanation, mentions that in Marathi udhr means 'in gross' and accordingly, udharjamābandhi has the meaning: 'Assessing the total revenue of a village upon the chief proprietor, leaving it to him to distribute the proportion'. On this basis he thinks that udraṅga was a tax imposed upon permanent tenants. Ghoshal,[5] accepting Fleet's equation

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1. Cf. Deo-Barnark Inscription of Jīvita Gupta, C.I.I. III, p. 217, l. 19.
2. Ibid., p. 98, f.n. 1.
3. Ind.Ant. XII, p. 189, f.n. 39.
4. Hindu Rev. Syst. p. 210.
5. Ibid.

of uparikara with the Marathi word upri, explains it as a tax on cultivators not originally belonging to a village but residing and occupying land in it, either upon a lease for a fixed period or at the pleasure of the proprietor.

A.S. Altekar[1] has attempted to equate udraṅga and uparikara with bhāgakara and bhogakara mentioned in the land grants of western India. But these equations do not seem convincing, for, there are instances where bhāga and bhoga are mentioned side by side with uparikara and udraṅga in the same inscription.[2] Lallanji Gopal[3] thinks that udraṅga and uparikara may be equated with kḷpta and upakḷpta in some land grants. He argues that in the Arthaśāstra, kḷpta has been used in the sense of a fixed tax, and upakḷpta may therefore mean an extra cess on cultivators over and above the fixed revenue of the state. D.C. Sircar[4] also mentions that some inscriptions appear to give kḷpta and upakḷpta in place respectively of udraṅga and uparikara, while the meaning of kḷpta and upakḷpta is probably determined by an inscription of the Kākatīya king Gaṇapati, which apparently uses the expressions kḷpta-kara and kḷpta-śulka in the sense respectively of 'fixed taxes' and

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1. Rāshṭrakūṭas and Their Times, pp. 214-66.
2. E.I. IX, 1907-1908, p. 5, pl. 16-17 and C.I.I. III, p. 179, ll. 67-68.
3. L. Gopal, Economic Life of North/ern India, p. 41.
4. Landlordism and Tenancy, p. 62.

'tolls'. Moreover, he thinks that udraṅga really means fixed taxes assessed on permanent tenants and uparikara as those levies which were not fixed.

In this connexion it may be pointed out that in Sanskrit, upari means 'upon' or 'extra',[1] and therefore uparikara can literally be translated as an 'extra tax' or a 'surtax' collected in addition to the usual royal share. This interpretation also agrees with that suggested by L. Gopal, on the strength of the Arthasāstra. As regards the meaning of udraṅga, S.K. Maity,[2] taking into consideration the word draṅga as occurring in the Rājataraṅgini in the sense of a watch-station, inclines to take udraṅga as a kind of police tax. Although this is the most probable suggestion, according to the Abhidhānacintāmaṇi[3] and the Abhidhānaratnamālā,[4] draṅga also means a city. In that case udraṅga has to be interpreted as a tax for the city. However, as A.K. Choudhary[5] has pointed out the word drāṅgika has been used in the Bhamodra-Mohota Inscription[6] of the Maitraka king Droṇasiṁha, to mean a local officer in charge of a

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1. Vaijayantī, 1, 37 (p. 288). M. Williams, Sanskrit English Dict. (1889) s.v.
2. S.K. Maity, Economic Life of Northern India in the Gupta period, 1957, pp. 95-96.
3. Abhidhānacintāmaṇi, IV, 37.
4. Abhidhānaratnamālā, II, 130.
5. A.K. Choudhary, Early Medieval Village in North-Eastern India, 1971, pp. 134-135.
6. Select Inscriptions (1965), p. 427, l. 1 and f.n. 5.

watch station. But D.C. Sircar[1] thinks that draṅga may be a watch-station or 'a station for the collection of dues'. Therefore it seems probable that udraṅga was a tax collected for the maintenance of watch-stations or that it denoted all the tolls collected at toll-gates.

The Khalimpur Inscription[2] mentions that three villages together with their haṭṭikā were granted to a temple of Nannanārāyaṇa. Kielhorn translated it as market dues. As we saw in a previous chapter, haṭṭa or markets were also included in some donations made to religious establishments. It is possible that haṭṭikā was used in the sense of market dues but haṭṭikā can also signify a small market.[3] Therefore in this case it may have been used to denote either the village markets or the market dues.

A number of Orissan inscriptions mention several other types of rights which are not normally found in the land grants of Bihar and Bengal. They include rights over kheṭa, ghaṭa and nadītara-sthāna. Kheṭa has been interpreted as a 'village' or a 'residence of peasants'.[4] The word ghaṭa or ghaṭṭa has the meanings 'quay', 'landing place' or 'steps by the riverside'.[5] The Agni Purāṇa[6] mentions levies of the

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1. Ibid., f.n. 5.
2. E.I. IV, 1896-1897, p. 250, l. 51; also see ibid., p. 254, f.n. 5.
3. D.C. Sircar gives both these meanings, cf. Ind. Ep. - , Gloss., p. 128.
4. M. Williams, Sanskrit English Dict. (1889), p. 340.
5. Ibid., p. 375.
6. Agni Purāṇa, 223, 25 and 258, 20.

toll (sthala-śulka) and ferry charges (tara-śulka) as additional sources of income of the king. Kauṭilya[1] and Yājñavalkya,[2] too, refer to custom tolls and ferry charges. Therefore most probably the transfer of rights over landing places or river crossings amounted to the revenue derived from such places.

A large number of land grant inscriptions mention that land was transferred with cauroddharaṇa.[3] Again, for this term too, various scholars have suggested different meanings. R.D. Banerji[4] translated it as 'with the right of extirpation of robbers', while Vogel[5] provided the interpretation 'the special privileges of prosecution of thieves'. N.G. Majumdar[6] took it to be 'police protection'. However, as U.N. Ghoshal[7] has rightly pointed out 'none of these scholars have paid any attention to the fact that cauroddharaṇa is one of the oppressions from which the donees were exempted in some of the Assamese grants'. He adds: 'There is no evidence to show that the transfer of civil jurisdiction was ever contemplated as possible in respect of the pious

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1. Arthaśāstra, II, 21-22.
2. Yājñavalkya, II, 263.
3. Bhagalpur Plate of Nārāyaṇapāla, Ind. Ant. XV, 1886, pp. 306 ff. l. 42. Nalanda Copper Plate of Devapāla, E.I. XVII, 1923-1924, p. 318, l. 35.
4. Ibid., XIV, 1917--1918, p. 330, f.n. 1.
5. J. Ph. Vogel, Antiquities of Chamba State, p. 129.
6. Inscriptions of Bengal, III, p. 8.
7. Hindu Rev. Syst. p. 214.

grants of land'. U.N. Ghoshal therefore refers to the Arthaśāstra[1] which refers to corarajju in the sense of a fee or a tax paid by villagers for protection against thieves. Meanwhile some of the Gupta inscriptions contain the term coravarjjam,[2] and Ghoshal[3] is inclined to take this as the same as corarajju in the Arthaśāstra. Theoretically, the responsibility of protecting people against thieves rested with the king; but as seen above, according to the Arthaśāstra, villagers had to make a payment in return for the protection he provided. It is also possible that villagers were held responsible for losses incurred by travellers as a consequence of robbers active within the village. Such responsibilities could have been a heavy burden on a village. On the other hand, it is possible that it was a levy on the villages for apprehending thieves who committed a robbery in the village.

Daśāparādha is another fiscal term usually found along with cauroddharaṇa. Some inscriptions contain daṇḍa-daśāparādha[4] or daśāpacāra[5] in place of daśāparādha. Fleet,[6] who first attempted to explain

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1. Arthaśāstra, III, 6, 9 and II, 29.
2. Khoh Plate of Mahāraja Hastin and Majhgawam C.P. of Mahāraj Hastin, C.I.I. III, p. 96, l. 13; ibid., p. 108, l. 10.
3. Hindu Rev. Syst., p. 211.
4. Una Plate of Balavarman, E.I. IX, 1907-1908, p. 5, l. 17.
5. Bhagalpur Inscription of Nārāyaṇapāla, Ind.Ant., XV, 1886, p. 306, l. 42.
6. C.I.I. III, p. 187, f.n. 4.

this term, believed that it denoted the donee's right to the collection of fines imposed on those committing ten specific offences. Elaborating this interpretation, B.C. Majumdar[1] suggested that daśāparādha might have been the donee's right of jurisdiction over ten offences. But arguing against this suggestion, Ghoshal[2] pointed out: "There is no authority for the supposition that the grant of rights of jurisdiction was ever contemplated in the case of holders of religious grants. The phrase undoubtedly stands for a kind of income from the villagers.' Moreover, in the light of the evidence from some land grants from Nepal, he maintained that daśāparādha may be explained as the right of the donees to be exempted, at least in part, from certain ordinary penalties for committing some ten offences traditionally known as daśāparādha. Yet, this explanation may not be applicable to all the grants but only to those inscriptions that contain the expression 'sahya-daśāparādha' which means 'with toleration from the ten offences'.[3] On the other hand, daśāparādha in this compound could also be considered as an abbreviation of daśāparādha-daṇḍa, which may be translated as fines from ten offences. As P.V. Kane[4] has argued, no king would ever think of

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1. Jour. Bihar Or. Res. Soc., II, 1916, p. 53.
2. Hindu Rev. Syst., pp. 219-220.
3. Vajrayogini Plate of Sāmalavarman, E.I. XXX, 1953-1954, p. 263, (reverse) l. 5.
4. History of Dharmaśāstra, III, Poona, 1946, p. 266.

exempting donees in pious grants or the villagers in those grants from the consequences of very grave offences. In this regard it may be pointed out that daśāparādha always occur in the land grants among the various items of income that had previously been enjoyed by the king. Hence, this term most probably stood for the fines imposed upon those who committed some ten offences within the village boundaries.

On the nature of the ten offences, too, scholars have expressed different opinions. Bühler[1] thought that they were ten actions relating to land, possibly under the Simāvivādaprakarana. Fleet[2] thought that the ten offences were the three sins of the body, three of the mind and four of speech. Yet, as shown by Beni Prasad,[3] it is highly improbable that the offences of the mind were subjected to legal punishment. In his opinion all judicial fines were meant by daśāparādha. But it is difficult to accept this explanation, for the term itself shows that it meant only ten offences, not all. J. Jolly,[4] following Nārada, states that the ten offences were disobedience to the king's orders, murder of women, intermixture of castes, adultery, pregnancy from someone who is not one's husband, abuse and defamation, obscenity, assault and abortion. This list includes a number of

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1. Ind.Ant., V, 1876, p. 115, f.n. 3.
2. C.I.I. III, p. 189, f.n. 4.
3. Beni Prasad, State and Government in Ancient India, p. 303.
4. J. Jolly, Hindu Law and Customs, pp. 268-70.

very grave offences most of which could well be termed crimes. However, it is very doubtful that some of these grave crimes should be punished merely with fines. At least some of them were punishable with death. Although it is difficult to explain the ten offences meant by daśāparādha in the present state of our knowledge, these must have been some ten specified crimes - probably not grave offences - which were well known to the people of the time.

One of the important problems concerning the property of the religious establishments is the degree of authority they could exercise over the land under their control. From the above discussion it became clear that these institutions had the right to receive different types of taxes and dues from the villages and from some plots of land that had been transferred to them. It should be noted, however, that not all the land grant inscriptions contain the conditions on which the land was granted, nor do they include any privileges or immunities transferred to the beneficiaries. In particular, some of those inscriptions that record grants of plots of land, belong to this category. There is no mention of any immunities or privileges with regard to the donation by a certain Pallavarāja of a plot of land measuring thirty khaṇḍikas, to a Vaiṣṇava temple in southern Orissa, in 1103 A.D., as recorded in the Brahmeśvara temple Inscription.[1] The Alagum Inscription[2] of the time of

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1. E.I. XXII, 1933-1934, p. 144, ll. 12-13.
2. Ibid., XXIX, 1951-1952, pp. 47-48.

Anantavarman Coḍagaṅga (1140 A.D.) also records the donation of a hala of land in the village of Alagummā (Alagum in the Puri district of Orissa) by a certain disāpati (diśāmpati)Kāmaṇḍi, but does not mention any rights transferred along with the land.

It may be argued that the absence of any reference to rights and privileges in these grants was due to the fact that, in these cases, the donors did not succeed in having their endowments proclaimed privileged by the king. Hence, the transfer was apparently limited to the property rights that the donors had previously been enjoying. Further, in favour of this argument it may be added that as the transfer of immunities and privileges could be effected only by the king himself, any donor who had obtained royal sanction for an endowment of that type would not hesitate to mention it in the grant as it would be to the benefit of the donee in many ways.

Yet, if this argument is accepted it is difficult to account for the absence of any reference to privileges and immunities in certain inscriptions recording land grants made by the ruling monarchs themselves. For instance, the Nagarjuni Hill Inscription[1] (second half of the sixth century A.D. Gaya district, Bihar) of the Maukhari king Anantavarman, which records the donation of a village by the king to the goddess Bhavānī,

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1. C.I.I. III, p. 226 ff. ll. 7-9.

does not contain any rights or privileges transferred along with the village. Similarly, a Liṅgarāja Temple Inscription,[1] though it records the endowment of a village by the Eastern Gāṅga king Anantavarman Coḍagaṅga to the Liṅgarāja temple, does not refer to any privileges or immunities transferred.

Certain other grants,[2] which were again made by kings, only mention that the villages were transferred along with sa-jala-sthala, without specifically referring to the rights the donees could enjoy. Although sajala-sthala literally means 'along with water and land', in this particular context it was most probably used to indicate rights over all the land and water within the boundaries of the village. An inscription[3] of the time of Anantavarman Coḍagaṅga, which records the endowment of a village by the king to a temple named Rājarājeśvara, states that the village was granted with its water and land and with the exemption from all kinds of oppression (parihṛta-sarvva-pīḍāḥ). Apparently these two expressions were used to imply the entire set of privileges and immunities that are explicitly stated in other grants. Accordingly, the absence of any specific reference to privileges and immunities in some of these grants was perhaps due to the fact that these

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1. Orissa Hist. Res. Jour., I, 1952, No. 2, p. 8.

2. Cf. Vizagapatham C.P., Ind. Ant. XVIII, 1889, p. 145, ll. 9-13.

3. Ibid., p. 164, ll. 37-38.

rights were normally considered to have been transferred to the donees when this type of a donation was made.

Those who drafted the documents may not have, therefore, considered it necessary to enumerate these immunities and privileges in detail.

The reference in the land grants to the king's claim over land and water, trees and grass and other resources has been taken by some scholars[1] to mean that all land, in the first instance, belonged to the king. This, by implication, means that when a donation of a tax-free holding was made by the king, all the rights, including the property rights, were transferred to the donee. According to K. Islam, this theory receives support from literary as well as inscriptional evidence. In support of her argument she cites the Tippera Copper Plate[2] of Lokanātha, according to which Lokanātha donated some forest land without precise boundaries, to one of his sāmantas to enable him to found and maintain a temple of Anantanārāyaṇa. Islam also refers to the Arthaśāstra[3] which considers the king as the sole owner of forest land.

It may, however, be argued that even if the king was considered the sole owner of forest land, it does not necessarily suggest that he enjoyed similar rights over agricultural and habitable land as well.

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1. K. Islam, Economic History of Bengal (unpublished thesis, Univ. of London, 1965), p. 283.

2. E.I. XV, 1919-1920, pp. 321 ff., ll. 21-22.

3. Arthaśāstra, II, 17, 1 ff.

On the other hand, if the king enjoyed such rights over land in its entirety, there would have been no need for the kings of this period to grant a number of small plots scattered over extensive areas, sometimes in different villages or in different administrative divisions (viṣaya). For instance, 375 halas of land donated by king Govindakeśava to a temple of god Śiva in the Sylhet area, were situated in five different villages.[1] The seven and a half pāṭakas of land granted by king Bhavadeva of Devaparvata to a Buddhist monastery at Veṇḍamatī in south-eastern Bengal, lay in four different villages, viz. two and a half pāṭakas at Vāhalakhaṇḍa at Veṇḍamatī, one pāṭaka at Ekkarakoṭṭa, two pāṭakas at Mañjikkakoraka and the remaining two pāṭakas at Koḍḍāvāra.[2] The Mainamati Copper Plate[3] of Laḍahacandra informs us that a land grant made by the king to a temple of Laḍahamādhava, consisted of three plots of land situated in three different villages. There is no reason to believe that all the other plots of land in these villages had already been donated so that the king was compelled to donate a number of small plots of land scattered in distant areas. If the king owned all the land in his territory he could have granted a single contiguous tract in one particular place, which would have been more convenient for the religious institutions concerned.

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1. Bhatera Copper Plate of Govindakeśava, E.I. XIX, 1927-1928, p. 277 ff., ll. 19 ff.
2. J.A.S.B. (letters), XVII, 1951, pp. 91-94.
3. Pakistan Archaeology, III, 1966, pp. 40-41, ll. 36-45.

Hence, the necessity for the kings of this period to donate several pieces of land scattered in different villages, suggests that, though the king had the right to collect taxes and other customary dues from all the land (except the tax-free endowments) within his domain, he did not enjoy property rights over all that land. There is no doubt, however, that the kings had their own private land holdings, often known as rājakīya-kṣetra, in many parts of the kingdom.[1] Moreover, the very fact that there was a separate type of land holdings known as rājakīya-kṣetra, implies the existence of land holdings other than rājakīya-kṣetra; and this strongly supports the argument that the king did not enjoy similar rights over land in its entirety.

Further, it is important that some inscriptions from other parts of the subcontinent provide more information that helps determine the nature of rights transferred in the donation of entire villages. For instance, mahāsāmanta Mādhava, a feudatory of the Cahamāna king Mahendrapāla II, granted the village Dhārāpadraka to a temple of Indrāditya at Goṭṭāvarṣikā, and made a further endowment of a field by the riverside to the north of the same village.[2] If it were the property rights and the right to receive taxes that were

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1. Dabok Inscription of Dhavalappadeva, E.I. XX, 1929-1930, p. 124, l. 5. For more references to kings' private land holdings, see Harsha Stone Inscription of Vigraharāja (973 A.D.), ibid., II, 1894, pp. 119 ff., ll. 33-44 and Charkhari Plate (1051 A.D.), E.I. XX, 1929-30, p. 127.

2. Ibid., XIV, 1917-1918, p. 186, l. 21 and l. 26.

transferred in the case of the donation of the village, then a further reference to the endowment of a field in the same village would be redundant. In this case therefore, the reference to the donation of the village has to be understood in the sense that only the rights over taxes and other revenue due to the state were granted to the temple, whereas in the case of the donation of the plot of land, the transfer involved property rights as well.

Thus it is clear that kings had property rights only over certain tracts of land, so that in the event of a donation he could transfer property rights as well as the rights over taxes and other dues. However, there is no reason to believe that all those who made land grants to religious establishments or to individual brāhmaṇas, were able to get their endowments declared tax-free, and in such cases the transfer obviously amounted only to that of the property rights the donor previously enjoyed. Yet, there can be little doubt as to the fact that when a grant was in the form of a royal edict all the rights of the king were involved in the transfer.

Two Copper Plates from Ashrafpur in Bengal, also shed valuable light on some aspects of the rights and privileges and of the tenurial system relating to the land granted to some religious establishments. Grant No. I[1] recording an endowment by king Devakhaḍga of an

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1. M.A.S.B., I, 1905, pp. 89-90, ll. 3 ff.

area totalling nine pāṭakas and ten droṇas[1] of land to Buddhist monasteries, mentions that the donation was made after the land had been 'taken away from the enjoyers' (bhuñjanād-apanīya). The other grant, the Copper Plate No. II,[2] records a similar donation of six pāṭakas and ten droṇas of land by Rājarāja, the son of king Devakhaḍga, to the same monastery in the same manner.

Grant No. 1[3] mentions that two pāṭakas had been 'enjoyed by' (bhujyamāna) queen Prabhāvatī and that some other pāṭakas of land (the number of pāṭakas is not clear) had been 'enjoyed' by a certain sāmanta Vantiyoka. Another pāṭaka had been 'enjoyed' by a certain Sarvāntara, and cultivated (kṛṣyamāna) by mahattara Śikhara and others. The term bhujyamāna or bhuñjyamāna, used in these records in referring to the persons from whom the land was 'taken away', before it was made over to the vihāra, poses several problems as it occurs in a wide variety of meanings. Monier Williams' Sanskrit-English Dictionary[4] provides the following meanings to bhuñj or bhuj, the root of the present participle bhujyamāna: 'to enjoy', 'to possess', 'to eat', and 'to usufruct'. Since the terms 'possession' and 'usufruct' have definite

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1. 20 droṇas or droṇavāpas = 1 pāṭaka, see ibid., p. 89.
2. Ibid., pp. 90-91, ll. 6-17.
3. Ibid., pp. 89-90, ll. 3-10.
4. Sanskrit English Dict. (1889), p. 759.

legal meanings of their own, neither of them would adequately represent the exact meaning and the many implications of bhujyamāna as used in these inscriptions. The present participle form of bhuj which literally means 'enjoyer' or 'one who enjoys' could by extension refer to a person who enjoys or makes use of the revenue of any kind of property. And it seems very likely that it is in this extended sense that this particular term occurs in our inscriptions. Hence, it does not necessarily follow that those who enjoyed such revenue had any proprietory right over the land. For, the second plate clearly shows that the real right to donate or to transfer the land to someone else rested solely with the prince Rājarāja, because it was his own land (svabhūmi).[1] When he desired to make a donation he could thus 'take the land away' from the 'enjoyers' and transfer it to the vihāras. Thus it is evident that those individuals who had been 'enjoying' the land were really enjoying only the revenue. In other words, they were not entitled to any permanent or irreversible rights over the land. This argument would gain further strength if the social status of some of the individuals who 'enjoyed' the land is taken into consideration. One of those mentioned in the first grant was the chief queen ([mahā]devī) of the king.[2] Another was one of his

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1. M.A.S.B., I, 1905, p. 90, l. 7.
2. Ibid., l. 4.

sāmantas.[1] Though the social status of the other 'enjoyers' is not mentioned in the inscription, it may be concluded from the term 'Śrī' that appears before their names (e.g. Śrī Mitrāvalī and Śrī Netrabhaṭa),[2] as it is in the case of the chief queen (Śrī Prabhāvatī), that they also belonged to the royal family or held high positions in society. The assignment of land to members of royal family and to royal officials was a well known practice in early medieval India. From the above discussion it would become clear that the Buddhist monasteries referred to above were endowed with all the rights previously enjoyed by the king and the prince, and therefore it is probable that the rights of the institutions were not limited merely to the enjoyment of land revenue.

A few land grants mention that land was granted according to akṣayanīvī-dharma.[3] This term is found in certain Gupta land grants in different forms such as akṣayanīvī,[4] nīvīdharma[5] and aphradā-akṣayanīvī.[6] Various scholars have attempted to interpret akṣayanīvī in different ways, depending on the meaning they suggested for the word nīvī. Citing a passage in the

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1. M.A.S.B., I, 1905, p. 90, l. 5.
2. Ibid., ll. 6-7.
3. Hindol Plate of Śubhākara III, Jour. Bihar Res. Soc., XVI, 1930, p. 78, l. 24.
4. E.I. XXI, 1931-1932.
5. Ibid., XV, 1919-1920, p. 130, l. 9.
6. Ibid., p. 133, l. 6.

Arthaśāstra,[1] K.P. Jayaswal[2] suggested that, as the word nīvī has the meaning of string, it could also stand for an official document or a despatch, because of the piece of string used to bind such official documents together. On the basis of this suggestion he proposed to interpret akṣayanīvi as 'permanent document or a document that should not be destroyed'. However, it is noteworthy that the passage in the Arthaśāstra, quoted by Jayaswal, does not speak of a permanent document as such, but refers to the amount that remains as net balance after considering all items of income and expenditure. In some other place Kauṭilya,[3] when prescribing various forms of punishments for entering false amounts pertaining to items of income, expenditure or balance, uses nīvī to mean balance.

R.G. Basak[4] has pointed out that the meaning given to akṣayanīvī in the Amarakośa and in the Abhidhānacintāmaṇi, suits the passages in the inscriptions. The Amarakośa[5] mentions nīvī as a synonym of paripaṇa and mūladhana (capital or principal stock in sale or similar transactions). And the Abhidhānacintāmaṇi[6]

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1. Arthaśāstra, II, 6, 13.
2. Ind.Ant., XXXIX, 1919, p. 13.
3. Arthaśāstra, II, 7, 35.
4. Ind.Ant., XXXIX, 1919, p. 13.
5. Amarakośa, 9, 80.
6. Abhidhānacintāmaṇi, III, 533 and 537.

equates nīvī with mūladravya (capital stock or capital material). The term akṣayanīvī is found not only in the land grants but also in inscriptions recording monetary endowments. According to a Nasik cave inscription[1] of the time of Kṣaharāta Kṣatrapa king Nahapāna, Usavadāta, the son-in-law of Nahapāna, granted a sum of 3,000 karṣāpaṇas as an akṣayanīvī, which was deposited with two guilds of weavers for the provision of clothing and kuṣana (the meaning of this term is not clear) for the Buddhist Saṁgha. The inscription clearly stipulates that this sum was not to be repaid (apadidātavā), and that only the interest (vadhibhoja) accruing from it was to be made use of.[2]

The literal meaning that can be suggested for akṣayanīvī on the basis of the Abhidhānacintāmaṇī and the Amarakoṣa is 'undiminishing capital', and this meaning accords well with the context of the Nasik Inscription which stipulates that the capital deposit should be left intact. Further evidence in support of the assumption that akṣayanīvī was used in this sense may be adduced from an inscription from Sanchi,[3] which has been ascribed to the middle of the fifth century A.D. This record informs us that a certain upāsikā or a Buddhist lay devotee named Harisvāminī made a donation of twelve dīnāras as an akṣayanīvī to a Buddhist monastery

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1. E.I. VIII, 1905-1906, p. 82, l. 1 ff.
2. Ibid., l. 3.
3. C.I.I. III, p. 33, ll. 8-9.

at Kākanādaboṭa, for the purpose of feeding a bhikṣu every day and for the maintenance of some lamps in the shrines. This inscription, like the Nasik Inscription of Usavadāta, mentions very clearly that only the interest (vṛddhi) of the deposit should be used for the intended purposes. Thus all the above evidence leads to the conclusion that in the case of an akṣayanīvī, the capital of the donation was to remain intact and that the beneficiaries could enjoy only the income derived from it. On the strength of this interpretation it is reasonable to assume that whenever land was granted according to the akṣayanīvīdharma or the 'law of akṣayanīvī', it has to be understood in the sense that although the grant was perpetual, the donees in no circumstances could dispose of the capital or the principal property and could only enjoy the income derived from the grant. This further shows that the rights of the donees were clearly limited and they did not enjoy the right of alienation. Presumably the idea of making a grant according to the akṣayanīvīdharma was to ensure that the grant would remain permanent so that the intended religious purposes could be performed perpetually.

The foregoing discussion shows that the religious establishments of the period under review enjoyed various types of rights over the land donated to them, depending upon the nature of the grants. In certain donations the rights of the institutions were limited to the collection of taxes and such other dues from the villages, but when the donations included rights

other than the collection of taxes, viz. certain property rights, the institutions concerned became responsible for bringing such land under cultivation. Little evidence is available as to how the land held by individual brāhmaṇas or religious institutions was brought under cultivation. Presumably the general terms and conditions of land tenure of the area, at the time, applied to these types of land as well.

It is evident that some of the land held by religious institutions was assigned to their employees on service tenure.[1] Apart from that, where land had already been held by peasants with a hereditary right of cultivation, those peasants would continue to till the soil even after that land became the property of a religious institution. The fact that the land mentioned in the Ashrafpur Copper Plates of Devakhaḍga, was owned by the king and the prince Rājarāja, while its revenue was enjoyed by several other persons and cultivated by yet another group of people[2] shows that some types of land were cultivated by peasants who did not enjoy any property rights over that land. Although the two Ashrafpur grants speak of the change in the enjoyment of income as a result of the making of the religious endowments, they are silent about the position of the cultivators. Most probably this was due to the fact that when the donation was made the main concern was the

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1. See infra, pp.218, 237, 243

2. See supra, p.147

transfer of control of the land from those who enjoyed its revenue to the monasteries; but the cultivators continued to till the land even after it became the property of the monasteries. The fact that the peasants mentioned in these grants had no property rights over the land may suggest that they cultivated the land on a share-cropping basis. The assignment of land to peasants to cultivate them on a share-cropping basis was well known in early medieval India. It was on this basis that a large number of South Indian temple land was given to cultivators. Besides, if the term udraṅga and uparikara occurring in some inscriptions denoted taxes collected from permanent and temporary tenants, as has been suggested by some scholars,[1] it also proves the prevalence of the practice of assigning land to peasants on a share-cropping basis.

I-tsing[2] mentions that, according to the Vinaya, the land held by the Buddhist monasteries should be given over to monastic servants or to other families for cultivation. He adds: 'Every produce should be divided into six parts and one-sixth should be levied by the Saṁgha, the Saṁgha has to provide the bulls as well as ground for cultivation but responsible for nothing else [sic].' As the Buddhist monks were not supposed to engage in 'profane activities', most of the monks who were faithful to the Vinaya, no doubt, followed this

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1. See supra, p.133

2. Record of the Buddhist Religion, p. 61.

practice and assigned the monastic land to share-croppers for cultivation. Most probably the contemporary Hindu temples also had to follow a similar system to bring the land under cultivation.

Although I-tsing mentions that according to the Vinaya the Buddhist Saṁgha could claim only one-sixth of the produce as their share, it is rather doubtful that this was the only income they received from the land under their control. It has already been shown that in most cases the religious establishments were entitled to receive not only the royal share which was theoretically defined as one-sixth of the produce, but also different other taxes and dues from the land donated to them. In fact, according to I-tsing[1] himself, the tenants of a monastery near Tāmralipti gave one-third of the vegetable crop they raised on monastic land to the Saṁgha. Here, the share of the Saṁgha was twice the amount prescribed by the Vinaya rule to which I-tsing has made reference. However, it is not clear whether the share of the institution varied according to the crop, as was the case in some parts of South India. A. Appadorai[2] has shown that in the Pāṇḍyan kingdom the landlord's share varied according to the crops grown, ranging from one-eighth for labour intensive crops such as sugar-cane to three-fourths from crops like coconut and mango that do not require much labour. According

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1. Record of the Buddhist Religion, p. 62.

2. A. Appadorai, The Economic Conditions of South India, Madras, 1939, p. 171.

to Burton Stein[1] who studied the inscriptions at the Tirupati temple in Andhra Pradesh, the temple land was given away to cultivators on lease and the temple received between 50 and 75 per cent of the produce as its share. Yet it is difficult to conclude on South Indian evidence that the eastern Indian Temples, too, levied a similar share from peasants. However, it is reasonable to assume that in general, the landlord's share varied according to the fertility of the land. When a piece of land required less labour and effort to bring under cultivation, it is probable that the landlord could claim a relatively high share. Devaṇṇabhaṭṭa in his Smṛticandrikā[2] enjoins that a ten per cent share may be given to an agricultural labourer if the crop can be raised easily, without much labour; otherwise one-third of the produce should be given to the peasant. This also indicates that the share of produce to which the landlord was entitled was much higher than that mentioned by I-tsing.

Though the religious establishments could give some of their land on lease or on service tenure or assign it to share-cropping peasants, there is evidence again from I-tsing, to suggest that certain Buddhist monasteries in eastern India were directly involved in cultivation. He states that certain monasteries, by

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1. B. Stein, 'The Economic Function of a Medieval South Indian Temple', Journal of South Asian Studies, XIX, No. 2, 1960, pp. 164-167.

2. Smṛticandrikā, II, p. 197.

using the labour of monastic servants, cultivated the land they held and collected all the produce for the Saṁgha.[1] Presumably the land thus directly cultivated by the monasteries was that over which they enjoyed full rights of property. The religious establishments of this period had, apart from the land they owned, the labour and capital required for direct involvement in agriculture. We also have evidence that they were endowed with bulls together with land for cultivation.[2] I-tsing,[3] too, mentions that Buddhist monasteries had to provide bulls to the peasants who cultivated monastic land. Besides the labour of the servants of these institutions, they could also make use of the compulsory labour they were entitled to from some of the inhabitants of the villages under their control.[4] It may also be assumed that, when necessary, the religious establishments could use hired labour for cultivation purposes. From Nārada[5] and Bṛhaspati[6] it is evident that the use of hired labour for agricultural purposes was well known at this time. Hence it is clear that most of the religious establishments of our period were in a sound position to engage themselves directly in agricultural pursuits, and thus to function as organized economic institutions.

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1. Record of Buddhist Religion, p. 61.
2. See supra, p. 94
3. Record of Buddhist Religion, p. 61.
4. See infra, p. 262
5. Nārada, VI, 3-4.
6. Bṛhaspati, XV, 9.

CHAPTER IV

MONETARY ENDOWMENTS

Definite evidence for the making of monetary endowments in favour of religious institutions is available from a time as early as the Kṣaharāta Kṣatrapa-Sātavāhana period. It has been shown in a previous chapter that, according to arrangements stipulated in certain Nasik cave inscriptions belonging to the time of the Kṣaharātas, the money was deposited with certain guilds of artisans and the interest accruing from these deposits was to be used for the provision of robes and other expenses of the monks who spent their vassa at the caves.[1] The earliest known monetary endowments to Hindu temples, too, had similar arrangements.[2] These endowments, though intended for religious purposes, were actually private arrangements between the donors and the guilds concerned so that, most probably, the religious institutions were not directly involved in the transactions.

There is, however, one inscription[3] from Cave No. 12 at Nasik, which reveals that certain Buddhist monasteries had already begun to accept money deposits directly from the donors on condition that the interest was used for the provision of robes to a monk who spends

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1. See supra, pp. 87-88
2. See supra, p. 87
3. E.I. VIII, 1905-1906, p. 90, ll. 1-6.

the vassa at the cave. Though it is difficult to establish the definite date of this inscription it may safely be ascribed to the end of the Sātavāhana period or that of the Ābhīras.

The next references to depositing money with monasteries are found in certain Gupta inscriptions from central India. In the Sanchi inscription[1] of Candra Gupta II, dated 412 A.D., mention is made of an endowment of twenty-five dīnāras made by one Amrakārdava to the Saṃgha, and the interest that accrued was to be utilized for the feeding of five bhikṣus and for the maintenance of a lamp at the stūpa. Another inscription from Sanchi,[2] ascribed to the time of Skanda Gupta, mentions that a certain female lay devotee (upāsikā) named Harisvāminī made a permanent endowment (akṣayanīvī)[3] of twelve dīnāras to the mahāvihāra at Kākanādaboṭa, and the interest accruing to this money was to be expended for the maintenance of a monk who is introduced to the community. The inscription further states that another sum of four dīnāras was given by the upāsikā, and that the interest on that money was to be used for the maintenance of lamps in the image-house where the images of the four Buddhas (probably the four dhyāni Buddhas) were seated. Furthermore, three dīnāras were given, and the interest on

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1. C.I.I. III, p. 31, ll. 5 ff.
2. Ibid., pp. 261-62, ll. 2-7.
3. For a discussion on this term see supra, pp. 149-152

that was to be expended for the maintenance of three lamps in the ratnagṛha.[1]

The evidence from these inscriptions shows that at least certain Buddhist monasteries had begun to accept direct monetary endowments not long after they began to accept landed property. The acceptance of direct monetary endowments was a major turning point in the economic activities of religious institutions, as it committed the institution to engage itself in profitable pursuits in order to pay interest on deposits.

It is, however, difficult to ascertain precisely when the Hindu temples started to accept monetary endowments with a view to carrying out certain religious functions. Some Kṣaharāta-Kṣatrapa grants[2] speak of endowments made to gods and brāhmaṇas, but supply no other details. Any clear evidence for the making of such endowments to Hindu religious establishments is available only from the time of the Imperial Guptas, yet even these records refer only to endowments deposited with guilds or similar secular institutions.[3]

During the period under review a considerable number of inscriptions coming from almost every part of the subcontinent - south India in particular - record

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1. It is not clear what was precisely meant by ratnagṛha. Perhaps it was used in the sense of a shrine-room or some other chamber in the monastery, named after the 'Buddhist Trinity' which is often referred to as tri-ratna or the 'triple gem'.

2. See supra, p. 85

3. C.I.I. III, p. 70, ll. 5-8.

monetary endowments made for religious purposes. Yet, relatively a few inscriptions from eastern India yield information in this respect. Even this small number of records contain very little details when compared with the contemporary south Indian records. Strangely enough, all the endowments of this period available from eastern India are those made in favour of Hindu religious establishments. Yet it is difficult to believe that the Buddhist institutions of this period were not accepting monetary endowments, a practice well known to them in the Gupta period and before. However, the Nālandā Inscription[1] of the time of Yaśovarmadeva, which describes some benefactions by a certain Mālāda towards the community of monks at one of the monasteries at Nālandā, refers to the creation of an akṣayanīvī providing for certain requirements of the Saṁgha. As we saw elsewhere, akṣayanīvī could be taken to mean a permanent endowment of landed property or a sum of money that could yield an income or interest.[2] The present record does not specify whether the akṣayanīvī consisted of land or money, but in verse 10 it is stated that Mālāda first bought everything from the Saṁgha with his own private means and subsequently donated it again to the Saṁgha.[3] This apparently implies that Mālāda's grant was that of a sum of money equal to the value of the

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1. E.I. XX, 1929-1930, pp. 43-44, v. 8.
2. See supra, pp. 149-152
3. E.I. XX, 1929-1930, p. 44, v. 10.

property of the vihāra. Yet, the fact that Mālāda bought everything from the Saṅgha suggests this included the perpetual provision of the four requisites of the monks, which is referred to in verse 9. Therefore it is possible that the akṣayanīvī was in the form of a monetary endowment.

Although the practice of depositing money directly with religious institutions for pious activities became popular in this period, it does not seem to have prevented or discouraged the donors from investing the money with guilds or similar secular institutions or with individuals to provide for religious purposes. At least three inscriptions, all of them from Orissa, refer to monetary endowments of this type. Of these, a Bhubaneswar Inscription[1] of the time of Anantavarman Coḍagaṅga (1114 A.D.) records that a certain Vīrāṇḍi deposited five māḍhas with eight persons who are described as residents of brāhmaṇa-khaṇḍa, i.e. the brāhmaṇa quarters, of the village of Allatadā for the maintenance of a perpetual lamp at the Liṅgarāja temple.

Instances of investing money with village councils for religious purposes were also not wanting in this period. A large number of south Indian inscriptions refer to such arrangements.[2] In fact, one of the records from Orissa itself registers an endowment of this type. An inscription[3] from the Kedāreśvara temple of

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1. E.I. XXX, 1953-1954, p. 32 (inscription no. 2), ll. 3-9.
2. S.I.I. III, 1929, pp. 2-3, ll. 3-7; ibid., p. 270, ll. 25 ff.
3. E.I. XXX, 1953-1954, pp. 94-95, ll. 3 ff.

Bhubaneswar (1142 A.D.) informs us that the inhabitants of the village of Nāgagarbhā in the Paiṁḍā viṣaya, headed by the pradhāni (headman or the village chief) Śaṇḍa,[1] received five mādhas of gold from rājan Pramādi, younger brother of king Anantavarman Coḍagaṅga, for the maintenance of a perpetual lamp in the temple. It is quite likely that the mention of the village inhabitants is in fact a reference to the village council or another representative body.

A few records throw some light on certain aspects of the procedure followed in the creation and the maintenance of a monetary endowment. The Gaya Inscription dated in the gatarājya of king Govindapāla[2] recording a monetary endowment to a matha of Gadādhara, mentions the names of seven witnesses who attended the ceremony of the creation of the benefaction. All of them are stated to have been residents of a penance-grove (tapovana), probably belonging to the matha. Two of the witnesses are described as servants of Viṣṇu. The particular mention of these two persons as servants of the god Viṣṇu suggests that others were not priests though they, too, were residents of the tapovana. On the other hand, following D.C. Sircar, it may be suggested that those two were 'probably associated with the administration of the Gadādhara temple', as the presence of temple officials

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1. E.I. XXX, 1953-1954, pp. 94-95, ll. 5-6. Nāgagarbhā-grāmīya-pradhāni-Śaṇḍa-prabhṛtibhiḥ grāma-nivāsibhiḥ.

2. Ibid., XXXV, p. 238, ll. 8-9.

was to be expected on such occasions.

The above mentioned Mārkāṇḍeśvara Temple Inscription[1] also refers to seven persons who witnessed the making of a monetary endowment. The titles of these persons show that they were actually officials of the temple management, including the chief scribe and the persons in charge of temple seals.[2] From this it is evident that the monetary endowments, whether the money was deposited with the institutions themselves or with outside bodies or individuals, were made in the presence of certain responsible persons.

The Gaya Inscription[3] makes, in addition to the details of the original grant, an additional endorsement at the end of the record mentioning that a sum of sixteen karṣāpaṇas was paid as interest on the capital of fifty karṣāpaṇas, and adds the names of two persons who witnessed the transaction. The interest was actually paid in cowree-shells though it was calculated in karṣāpaṇas. This indicates that the payment of interest as well as the making of an endowment was done in the presence of witnesses.

Although inscriptions refer to monetary endowments calculated in coins such as karṣāpaṇas and gold māḍhas, scholars[4] have pointed to the dearth of coinage in northern

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1. E.I. XXXIII, 1959-1960, p. 185, ll. 7-9.

2. For a discussion on the titles of these officials see infra, pp. 212 - 218

3. E.I. XXXV, 1963-1964, p. 238, l. 15.

4. R.S. Sharma, Indian Feudalism, 1965, pp. 65-66; L. Gopal, Economic Life in Northern India, 1965, pp. 217 ff.

India since the end of the Gupta period. A large number of inscriptions refer to various types of coins, but very few have been found. Therefore, this raises the question as to what particular medium of exchange was used in these transactions. It is quite possible that the already existing gold and silver coins were continued to be used even in later times. It is, however, important to note that cowree-shells were a well known medium of exchange in this period. The use of cowrees, even in the Gupta times, is attested to by Fa-hsien.[1] As we have pointed out earlier, the interest accrued to the deposit of fifty karṣāpaṇas, as mentioned in the Gayā Inscription dated in the gatarājya of Govindapāla, was paid in cowrees.[2] Although there was a dearth of coins during the period under consideration there is no reason to believe that there was a total absence of coinage. For there have been found several gold coins of the Eastern Gāṅgas, a type known as the Gāṅga Fanam. Most of the available coins of this type are believed to belong to the time of Anantavarman Coḍagaṅga.[3] Besides, a large hoard of about 200 silver coins of the Candra rulers of south-eastern Bengal, has been found in the Mainamati area.[4] Although the number of coins belonging to the

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1. F.A. Giles, Travels of Fa-hsien, p. 43.

2. See supra, p. 164

3. D.C. Sircar, Studies in Indian Coins, Delhi, 1968, pp. 242 ff.

4. A.H. Dani, 'Coins of the Candra Kings of East Bengal', Journal of the Numismatic Society of India, XXIV, 1962, p. 141.

period under consideration is relatively small, from the above evidence it is clear that there was no total absence of gold and silver coinage in eastern India. This limited number of gold and silver coins were presumably in circulation alongside the copper coins and cowrees.

The law-books of the period contain various laws pertaining to money-lending between individuals, but pay little attention to the activities of individuals and institutions accepting money-deposits and paying interest on them. Therefore it becomes difficult to ascertain what particular methods were followed in maintaining these endowments or by what particular rules they were governed. Yet, the Mārkāṇḍeśvara Temple Inscription at Puri, Orissa, contains some valuable information concerning the way in which the religious endowments made with individual financiers were maintained. According to this record, three persons, namely Bhīmadeva, Ruda (Rudra?) and Hari, accepted some gold (i.e. a sum of money) from three pūjāhāris[1] named Hari, Vandau and Vāsu, for the maintenance of a chāyādīpa[2] before the god Mārkāṇḍeśvara.[3] The inscription then goes on to say that Bhīmadeva's son Nāna freed himself from the obligation (of maintaining the lamp). This implies that Nāna had

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1. For a discussion of the term see infra, pp. 219-220

2. The expression chāyādīpa means a lamp held in one of the hands of an image, usually of the donor. See E.I. XXXIII, 1959-1960, p. 183.

3. E.I. XXXIII, 1959-1960, p. 185, ll. 3-4.

become responsible for the deposit made with the three persons, including his father who is described in the record as a sādhu,[1] probably after the latter's death. D.C. Sircar thinks that the reason why the responsibility fell solely upon Bhīmadeva's son was that Ruda and Hari (the two persons, who, along with Bhīmadeva, accepted the original deposit) were either sons or brothers of Bhīmadeva. But it is also possible that, if the term sādhu used to describe the three persons can be taken to mean 'a merchant' as has been suggested by Sircar himself, Bhīmadeva, Ruda and Hari were not necessarily relatives but only trading partners. And after the death of the other two or after their departure from business for some unknown reason, the responsibility may have come upon Bhīmadeva. However, the most important fact that comes to light from the above statement is that the descendants of a person who originally accepted a deposit had to take up the responsibility of carrying out the agreement. On the other hand, the fact that Nāna could free himself from the responsibility of providing for the maintenance of the lamp by refunding the deposit indicates that, though the son was responsible for his father's business agreements, it was not compulsory for the son to continue the agreement.

The main purpose of creating a monetary endowment was to utilize the interest accruing from the deposit

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1. D.C. Sircar, on the strength of the Lekhāpaddati, translates this term as 'a merchant'. See E.I. XXXIII, 1959-1960, p. 183 and Ind. Ep. Gloss, p. 284 and p. 285.

to ensure that certain religious ceremonies or other duties were to be carried out. Such duties are often formulated in a general way, but sometimes specified in some detail. Sometimes the interest on deposits was to be paid in kind in a specified manner. For example, the Puri Inscription of Coḍagaṅga[1] stipulates that a financier (śresthin) named Jīvanta had to provide 200 measures of oil every month for the maintenance of a lamp at the Mārkāṇḍeśvara temple, as interest on a deposit made with him. It is also evident that sometimes the interest was paid in cash, for the Gaya Inscription[2] dated in the gatarājya of Govindapāla, clearly mentions that the interest on the deposit made with the matha of Gadādhara was actually paid in cowrees (kapardakas), a well known medium of exchange at the time.

This inscription also provides us with some valuable information on the rate of interest paid on deposits made with religious institutions. The record informs us that sixteen karṣāpaṇas were paid as annual interest on an amount of 50 karṣāpaṇas deposited with the matha.[3] Thus the annual rate of interest was 32 per cent. The only other record from our region that refers to the rate of interest paid on a monetary endowment is the Bhubaneswar Inscription[4] of Pramādi (1142 A.D.),

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1. E.I. XXXIII, 1959-1960, p. 185, ll. 6-7.
2. Ibid., XXXV, 1963-1964, p. 238, ll. 15 ff.
3. Ibid., ll. 7-14.
4. Ibid., XXX, 1953-1954, p. 90, ll. 3-7.

according to which the inhabitants of the village of Nāgagarbhā in the Paiṁḍā visaya received five māḍhas of gold from prince Pramādi, for the maintenance of a perpetual lamp at the temple of god Kedāreśvara. It reveals that the villagers had to pay a monthly interest of 5 pādas being a pāda on each māḍha so deposited. If the word pāda is taken in its literal meaning of 'a quarter' it would suggest that an amount of one and a quarter gold māḍhas was to be paid every month as interest. Then the rate is 25 per cent per month or 300 per cent a year. When compared with the 32 per cent annual rate of interest indicated in the above mentioned Gaya Inscription, the 300 per cent seems quite excessive.

However, it is not clear from the Bhubaneswar Inscription what was actually meant by the word pāda. Though it could be taken to mean a quarter, as D.C. Sircar[1] has pointed out it should not necessarily mean a quarter of a gold māḍha; it may also mean a quarter of a standard silver coin or some other currency prevalent in Orissa. Though we have no evidence from Orissa for the existence of a coin known as pāda, the contemporary Pratīhāra inscriptions refer to a coin of that name.[2] Even if there existed a coin named pāda in Orissa, there is no way to compare its value with the māḍha or any other known currency. On the other hand, if pāda could be taken to mean a quarter of the standard silver coin which was

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1. E.I. XXX, 1953-1954, p. 92.

2. B.N. Puri, The History of the Gurjara-Pratīhāras, 1957, p. 136.

one-fifth of the value of the gold mādha,[1] it shows that five silver mādhas was the monthly interest which was amounting to 60 per cent per annum.

If the interest was 300 per cent, which is the rate calculated according to the first interpretation, it would certainly be an excessive rate for a monetary endowment; and even 60 per cent is a very high rate. But such exorbitant rates were not entirely unknown to the ancient Indian law-givers. For, Kauṭilya[2] prescribes a 60 per cent interest on loans given to persons engaged in ordinary trade, and 120 per cent on loans given to traders who travel through jungle. An excessively high rate of 240 per cent is recommended on loans made to sea-faring traders. Yājñavalkya,[3] too, recommends the same rates on loans to those engaged in similar business.

Vijñāneśvara,[4] the eleventh-century commentator on Yājñavalkya, while approving of the above rates, asserts that the risk involved in such trades was so high that the traders could lose not only their capital but also their lives in the event of shipwreck or if attacked by robbers or wild animals. The mathematical work Bījaganita[5] of Bhāskarācārya, though not belonging to the

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1. D.C. Sircar, Studies in Indian Coins, 1968, p. 65 and pp. 97 ff.
2. Arthaśāstra, III, 11.
3. Yājñavalkya, II, 38.
4. Mitākṣarā on Yājñavalkya, II, 38.
5. Bījaganita, pp. 232-248.

category of law-books, refers, while elucidating certain mathematical problems, to interest rates ranging from 21 to 162 per cent per annum. Yet the Līlāvatī[1] of the same author mentions rates of interest varying between 36 and 60 per cent. It is quite probable that these works refer to actual rates prevailing at the time, as it is difficult to believe that the author would use absurd or unrealistic examples to explain the mathematical problems.

These high rates of interest on loans recommended by the law-givers are not altogether corroborated by evidence from the contemporary inscriptions. D. Sharma[2] has shown that the rates of interest paid on religious endowments in the Cāhamāna kingdom ranged between 30 and 33 per cent per annum. And according to some tenth-century Cōḷa records, the annual interest paid on religious endowments varied from 15 to 40 per cent.[3] In this regard it is worth noting that most of the law-books often refer to interest rates in the context of their discussions on the lender-debtor relationship based on the system of money-lending between individuals. Hence little attention is paid to the laws or conventions that regulated money deposits or the rates of interest paid on them.

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1. Līlāvatī, pp. 31-37.

2. D. Sharma, Early Cauhan Dynasties, Delhi, 1959, p. 301.

3. S.I.I. III, 1929, p. 241, ll. 5 ff; ibid., p. 270, ll. 25 ff. Also see R.S. Sharma, 'Usury in Early Mediaeval India (A.D. 400-1200)', Comparative Studies in Society and History, VIII, 1960, pp. 56-76.

Moreover, as far as money deposits are concerned, money-lending may only be the second stage of the procedure followed in earning interest, as the depository has to lend the money at a higher rate of interest or invest the capital to earn an income greater than that which he has to pay to the depositor. Therefore the interest rates mentioned in the law-books do not necessarily represent the interest paid on money deposits and this would perhaps explain the difference between the excessively high rates of interest mentioned in the law-books and the relatively low rates mentioned in the inscriptions.

Yet, at least in certain instances, the interest paid on certain endowments from the Cōḷa kingdom were relatively high. We have already pointed out that in one case the annual interest paid on a monetary endowment was as high as 40 per cent. A stone inscription[1] in the Viṣṇu temple at Ukkal, Tanjore, dated in the 29th regnal year of Rājarāja I, informs us that the village assembly paid 500 kāḍis of paddy a year as interest on a religious endowment of 1000 kāḍis of paddy. Here, the annual rate of interest was 50 per cent. It is interesting to note that, in this case and also in the instance where a 40 per cent interest on money was paid, the deposits had been made with local village assemblies. Perhaps this was because the village assemblies were capable of

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1. S.I.I. III, 1929, p. 9, ll. 1-3.

paying higher interests on deposits made with them, by virtue of the more profitable economic and administrative affairs they carried out.[1] Thus in the light of this evidence the 60 per cent interest rate suggested in our interpretation of the Bhubaneswar Inscription of Pramādi,[2] would not sound abnormal.

On the other hand, even the 32 per cent interest mentioned in the Gaya Inscription dated in the gatarājya of king Govindapāla, is considerably higher than the interest rates we come across in some south Indian records.[3] But when compared with the average rates between 30 and 33 per cent in the Cāhamāna records and the rates between 25 and 40 per cent in most Cōḷa grants,[4] the 32 per cent of the above mentioned Gaya Inscription seems to be an average interest rate for money deposited with religious establishments. It is, however, difficult to arrive at any definite conclusion on the particular rates of interest in any given region of India during this period because of the paucity of material. And it is also difficult to generalize on this point on the little evidence available to us, as the rates of interest

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1. For the functions of village assemblies in south India during this period see, A. Appadorai, Economic Conditions of South India, I, 1936, pp. 135 ff.

2. See supra, p. 170

3. See supra, p. 171

4. S.I.I. III, 1929, p. 2, ll. 3-7; ibid., p. 270, ll. 25 ff.; ibid., p. 239, ll.
R.S. Sharma, op.cit., p. 62.

could vary according to different regional, historical, economic and other circumstances. Moreover, the fact that even in the Cōḷa kingdom, from where we get relatively more evidence pertaining to this subject, the interest rates varied between 5 and 40 per cent, highlights the difficulty as well as the danger of generalization.

Despite the regional variations and other circumstances that could affect the interest rates, it was clear that interest rates in India remained fairly high throughout the period under review. We have already seen that even the Arthaśāstra which was written several centuries before our period, prescribes very high interest rates on certain types of loans. And these high rates are also confirmed by the law-books of the later periods. For want of more evidence it is difficult to account for this phenomenon which is also reflected in the religious endowments from eastern India. Apart from the political instability that could have disrupted the entire economic life, it may be argued that the general decline in trade and monetary activity, which was a striking feature of the economic system of the period,[1] also would have contributed largely to create a greater demand for money, thereby making interest rates rise high.

The acceptance of monetary endowments by the religious establishments with a view to utilizing the

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1. See L. Gopal, Economic Life in Northern India, 1965, pp. 175 ff.

interest for religious functions, as we have pointed out earlier, committed the institutions to invest that money in profitable enterprises. Unfortunately, hardly any direct evidence is available from eastern India as to the particular economic pursuits in which the money was invested. It is evident that at least some of the religious institutions were actively engaged in the cultivation of some land under their control. As agriculture was the mainstay of the economic system, it is quite likely that the religious institutions invested their money in agriculture.

In his study of the monetary endowments and the livestock redistribution of the Tanjore temple during the Cōḷa period, G.W. Spencer has shown that large amounts of money deposited with the temple were used by its authorities to purchase livestock such as cows, ewes and she-buffaloes. These animals were then distributed among shepherds who, in turn, had to supply specific quantities of ghee and milk to the temple. Thus these produces were the interest received by the temple on its investments.[1] Milk and ghee were two major items in the daily offerings at Hindu temples, and ghee was also required in the preparation of food and for lighting lamps. Hiuen-Tsang[2] refers to large

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1. G.W. Spencer, 'Temple money-lending and Livestock redistribution in early Tanjore', Indian Economic and Social History Review, V, no. 3, 1968, pp. 277-293.

2. S. Beal, Life of Hiuen-Tsang, pp. 112-113.

quantities of milk and butter (ghee?) brought to the Nālandā monastery every day by its tenants. Thus it is evident that these items were among the major requirements of the religious institutions of all denominations. We have seen in a previous chapter that the religious establishments in eastern India also had been endowed with bullocks, she-buffaloes, ewes, etc., and presumably these institutions, too, had to distribute their livestock among shepherds of the area, like their counterparts in south India, and probably they also invested their money in livestock-breeding which was no doubt a lucrative venture.

The Ahar Stone Inscription from Uttar Pradesh contains some interesting information as to how the temple of goddess Kanakeśvarīdevī, in the city of Tattānandapura, invested its money in profitable pursuits. The inscription which consists of several records covering the period between 864-904 A.D., shows that the managing committees of the temple purchased several apartments (āvāri) on 99 year leases with the money belonging to the temple, and that the rent collected from those houses was spent for regular worship of the deity.[1]

Although we come across references to houses and house-sites owned by religious institutions in our region, it is not known whether all of them were bought

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1. E.I. XIX, 1927-1928, pp. 58-62, documents 2, 4, 6, 8 and 10.

by the institutions themselves or were mere donations made by pious followers. However, an incidental reference made by I-tsing concerning certain material possessions of Buddhist monks suggests that individual monks were engaged in similar profit-making activities. I-tsing,[1] while discussing arrangements made by the congregation for the disposal of the possessions of deceased monks, states that if money due on deeds and contracts entered into by the deceased was payable at once, it should be realized immediately and given to the monks present. If the money was not due immediately, the relevant deeds and contract documents should be preserved in the monastic treasury until such time as the money fell due. This shows how certain monks were using their own capital to purchase mortgages and to enter into contracts.

An interesting fact that comes to light from I-tsing's statement is that the monastery assumed the responsibility of preserving the deeds and contracts of the deceased monks until the money was to be realized. This implies that, with the acquisition of these documents, the monastery also committed itself to honour the agreements made by the deceased; in other words, the monastery had to look after the former business interests of the deceased monks. What is more important is that by preserving the documents pertaining to deeds and

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1. J. Takakusu, Record of Buddhist Religion, p. 192.

contracts, the monastery eventually assumed the responsibility of carrying out the agreements. Otherwise the monastery could not have claimed the money due on the contracts. It is reasonable, therefore, to assume that the monasteries could accept such responsibilities because they themselves had been engaged in economic activities of this kind. Moreover, it is hard to believe that the monasteries would allow their inmate-monks to act on their own by investing their private wealth in profitable ventures while the monasteries themselves were standing aloof of such activities.

CHAPTER V

THE ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT OF PROPERTY

The basic organization of the religious establishments, which took different forms in different religious sects, was originally devised to meet the basic requirements of the inmates and the performance of certain religious rituals and ceremonies. But with the growth of property, its management became the responsibility of the religious institutions concerned. During the period under review, vast areas of land, sometimes in distant places, were transferred together with a wide variety of rights attached, to these establishments. Certain Hindu temples as well as Buddhist monasteries had hundreds of villages under their control. In certain instances, the income of several administrative divisions was involved in a single transfer. In fact, most of the religious bodies were actively participating in agriculture in one way or another.[1]

Moreover, with the practice of making direct monetary grants to religious establishments on condition that the interest was used for religious functions on behalf of the donor, the institution became directly involved in the investment of the money so deposited, in order to earn interest which could be utilized for

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1. See supra, pp.156-157

specified purposes.

Besides, the religious institutions had to perform various types of ceremonies and rituals which became more and more elaborate in the course of time. Most of these required great attention and care as well as a considerable amount of labour and resources. The maintenance of educational and charitable institutions associated with most religious bodies, too, necessitated the employment of different types of officials, teachers and a large number of servants.

Apparently, the original administrative set-up of the religious institutions would not have been adequate to meet the demands of the new responsibilities involving the management of property and the internal administrative affairs. Hence, from time to time, it might have become necessary for the religious establishments to make considerable changes in their administrative structures to suit the new requirements. Thus, the extensive and elaborate administrative set-up of the religious institutions of the period under consideration seems to have been the result of a long process of development, though there is little evidence to trace its various stages.

A study of the administrative organization of the religious institutions of the period under review has to be based mainly on epigraphic evidence and, except for the records of the Chinese travellers Hiuen-Tsang and I-tsing, very little information is available in other literary works. Both Hiuen-Tsang and I-tsing, who visited some of the Buddhist monasteries in northern India, have left valuable notes on certain aspects of monastic

organization. However, their information is largely limited to the functions of larger monasteries like Nālandā, and therefore very little is known about the management of the affairs of smaller monasteries. Moreover, their information is of little help for a proper understanding of the differences in the administrative set-up of the monasteries that belonged to different Buddhist nikāyas.

The available evidence from inscriptions is also subject to several limitations. In most instances the inscriptions provide us only with a list of a few persons who seem to have been associated with the administration of a religious establishment. Therefore, one has, for the interpretation of the functions and duties of such persons, to rely mainly on the etymology of these titles, which is not always a satisfactory method. On the other hand, certain epigraphic terms, taken by themselves, do not enlighten us on their specific relevance and importance to the administrative organization of these institutions; therefore, for the explanation of such terms it becomes necessary to look forward to evidence from other parts of the subcontinent. Yet again, the validity of any interpretation of these terms based on evidence from other areas may be questionable on the grounds of possible regional variations. Hence, it is unavoidable that any discussion based on these scanty evidence leaves many problems unsolved.

Among all the religious sects in ancient India it was the Buddhist Saṅgha that seems to have been the first group to emerge as an organized religious order

based on permanent residence. Even at the time when the Saṁgha had no permanent dwellings, the monks were governed by an accepted code of discipline known as the Vinaya. With the gradual change to a settled life, new Vinaya rules were laid down for the purpose of administering the affairs of the monasteries. Rules governing every aspect of monastic life were discussed by the Saṁgha at their fortnightly meetings known as uposatha. At the same time, the duties of every resident monk and his obligations towards the community were also laid down.[1] The decisions pertaining to the administration of a particular monastery were taken by the assembly of the entire community of resident monks, and thus the management of the affairs of an āvāsa or a monastery was the responsibility of the whole community of monks living there.[2]

Originally, every item of property granted to the Saṁgha was considered to have been given for the benefit of the entire community.[3] With the growth of monastic property and of the functions of the monasteries, their organization also seems to have undergone considerable change, to a large extent within the original framework, to suit the demands of the changing Saṁgha life. From time to time, the Vinaya rules were modified and provided with new interpretations so as to keep pace with the new developments.[4]

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1. S. Dutt, Early Buddhist Monachism, 1924, pp. 98 ff.
2. Ibid., pp. 146 ff.
3. Vinayapiṭaka, I, 304 ff.
4. G. Panabokke, The evolution of the Buddhist monastic order with special reference to Ceylon, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Lancaster, 1969, pp. 60 ff.

The original idea that authority was vested in the Saṁgha as a whole was still the basis of the administrative organization of the monasteries of the period under review. Although the concept of private property held by individual monks seems to have been well established by then, any property donated to a monastery was generally considered to be the common property of the whole community. In practice, however, each individual monastery had the ultimate authority over its property. When Hieun-Tsang was admitted to the Nālandā monastery, the assembly of monks announced through the deputy incumbent, that Hiuen-Tsang would be entitled to use 'all commodities used by priests and all appliances of religion, in common with the rest'.[1] I-tsing,[2] making a direct reference to the property of the Saṁgha, mentions: 'A gift to the church, whether a field or a house or some insignificant thing, is understood to be given for the clothing and food for the priests [sic]. Thus the church can make use of the benefactions as it likes without any fault, as long as it carries out the original intention of the giver'. Thus it is clear that the ultimate authority over monastic property was vested in the community of resident monks of the institution.

Since the ultimate authority over the affairs of a monastery rested with the entire community of resident monks all the major decisions concerning the internal

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1. S. Beal, Life of Hiuen-Tsang, p. 106.

2. J. Takakusu, Record of Buddhist Religion, pp. 193-194.

administration and the management of property was taken at the general assembly of the congregation. I-tsing[1] observed at a monastery near Tāmralipti, that on every upavasatha day a great multitude of monks, all having assembled there late in the afternoon from several monasteries, listened to the reading of the mastic rites which they obeyed and carried out with reverence. In this instance I-tsing may be referring to the reciting of pātimokkha which includes the rules governing the affairs of mastic life. Again, speaking of the affairs of the said monastery, I-tsing[2] mentions that when any business occurred, it was settled by the assembly, and if any monk decided anything by himself alone or treated his fellow monks favourably or unfavourably at his own pleasure without regarding the will of the assembly, he was expelled from the monastery. This clearly indicates that individual monks could not act on their own regardless of the wishes of the community, and had to obey the authority of the assembly.

The assembly met in sessions, presided over by a senior monk, to decide the affairs of the monastery.[3] When Hiuen-Tsang decided to stay at the Nālandā mahāvihāra for some time, his desire was put to the assembly which announced its approval through the deputy incumbent.[4]

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1. J. Takakusu, Record of Buddhist Religion, p. 63.
2. Ibid., pp. 62-63.
3. S. Beal, Life of Hiuen-Tsang, p. 106.
4. Ibid.

The assembly arranged the uposatha and other ceremonies of the monastery.[1] I-tsing[2] states that at Nālandā and at the Bhārata (?) monastery at Tāmralipti, it was the assembly that assigned rooms and servants to resident monks. The disposal of the belongings of the dead monks was also carried out by the assembly. At this meeting the Saṁgha decided what items of the deceased should be restored to the common property of the community, and what items should be divided among those present.[3]

Another important function of the assembly was the distribution of the income of the monastery among its inmates. I-tsing says that the produce of the farms and gardens and the profits arising from trees and fruits were distributed annually in shares among the resident monks.[4] Most probably this was done at the end of the kaṭhina ceremony, as according to I-tsing[5] himself, on the pavāraṇa day, either the laymen presented gifts, or the Saṁgha itself distributed them, having brought all kinds of gifts before the assembly.

A large number of seals and sealings found at Nālandā provide valuable data for the study of certain aspects of monastic administration which are not mentioned

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1. Record of Buddhist Religion, p. 63 and pp. 147-149.
2. Ibid., pp. 64 and 86.
3. See supra, p. 102
4. Record of Buddhist Religion, p. 193.
5. Ibid., p. 87.

in the accounts of the Chinese travellers. The majority of the seals bear the legend 'Śrī Nālandā mahāvihāra caturdiśāryabhikṣusaṅghasya',[1] which may be translated as '[The seal] of the Saṅgha of Venerable Bhikṣus of the Four Quarters at the Nālandā mahāvihāra'. As these seals refer to the entire community of monks at Nālandā, it is evident they were used to denote the authority of the general assembly of monks.

One of the seals refers to a monastery in the mahāvihāra; this seal bears the legend [Nālandā]yāṁ śrī-Śakrāditya-kārita-[vi]hāre cāturdiśī-ārya mā(ma)-hā-bhikṣu-saṅghasya.[2] If the reading of this inscription is accepted, the legend may be translated as '[The seal] of the Saṅgha of the Four Quarters in the monastery caused to be built by Śrī Śakrāditya, at Nālandā'. Obviously, there were several other monasteries or vihāras of this kind on the premises of the Nālandā mahāvihāra. Hiuen-Tsang[3] refers to six such vihāras erected by various kings from time to time. The Nālandā Copper Plate[4] of Devapāla refers to another monastery built by Bālaputra-deva, the king of Sumatra. In fact, the archaeological

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1. H. Sastri, 'Nalanda and its Epigraphic Material', Mem. Arch. Surv. India, 66, 1942, pp. 39-40.
   The mention of the 'Saṅgha of the Four Quarters' is interesting. This shows that although in practice, the authority of individual monasteries had long been established, in theory at least, the original idea of the Saṅgha of the Four Quarters was still alive.

2. H. Sastri, op.cit., p. 38, no. S.I.848.

3. Life of Hiuen-Tsang, pp. 110-111.

4. E.I. XVII, 1923-1924, (ed. H. Sastri), p. 322, ll. 37-38.

excavations have brought to light the structures of eleven large monasteries at Nālandā.[1] The existence of a separate seal for one of these monastic institutions strongly suggests that individual monasteries had their own assemblies that looked after some of their own internal administrative affairs. This assumption is supported by a statement in I-tsing's account, according to which at Nālandā, in certain instances, the monks assembled in their individual monasteries as it was not convenient for all the monks to get together every time they wished to do so.[2] It would not have been an easy task for the general assembly to carry out every function involving the administration of a large institution like Nālandā which had thousands of students, resident monks and lay students, as well as a large number of servants. Hence the growth of monastic institutions into a large educational establishment with huge resources would have paved the way for a decentralized form of administration under the control of the general assembly.

Further evidence from seals suggests that at Nālandā, for the proper functioning of the administrative machinery, at least some of the administrative functions were kept under the supervision of groups of monks. One of the seals carries the legend Śrī-Nālandā-cīvara-kosthikāyātārya-bhikṣu-saṅghasya.[3] This may be rendered

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1. D. Mitra, Buddhist Monuments, Calcutta, 1971, p. 87.
2. Record of Buddhist Religion, p. 154.
3. Nālandā and its Epigraphic Material, p. 40, seal no. 9 R 15 d.

as '[The seal] of the bhikṣusaṁgha engaged in the repository of robes'. The provision of robes for monks was one of the objectives of most of the endowments made to the Buddhist Saṁgha.[1] From I-tsing[2] we learn that in Indian monasteries the robes for the monks were supplied out of the common funds. The expression cīvara-koṣṭhikā on the seal suggests the existence of a repository or a store specially maintained for the storage of robes, and it seems that this store was kept under the supervision of a group of monks. Probably this group was responsible for the procurement and the distribution of robes among the resident monks.

Another seal has the inscription Śrī-Nālandā-mūla-navakarmmavārika-bhikṣūṇāṁ.[3] The term navakarma is found in a number of inscriptions recording donations to religious institutions; in these records, this term has been used in the sense of construction of new buildings or repair work to the existing ones.[4] However, it is not clear what was precisely meant by mūla-navakarma in the inscription on the seal. As the word mūla may mean 'basic' or 'main', it could be suggested that it meant the basic repairs and construction work.

The term vārika has been interpreted by Monier

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1. See supra, p. 96
2. Record of Buddhist Religion, p. 193.
3. Nālandā and Its Epigraphic Material, p. 37, seal no. S.I. 1005, S, 4, 40.
4. See supra, p. 98

Williams[1] as 'a chief person in a court or an assembly'. According to D.C. Sircar,[2] the Charter of Viṣṇusena (c. 605 A.D.) of Valabhi, uses vārika in the sense of a government or a local official. In south Indian inscriptions it is used to denote a member of the committee known as vāriyam which mostly consisted of elected representatives.[3] In early Buddhist literature, the monks who were elected by the assembly to look after various monastic affairs are referred to as vārika.[4] It is important to note that in this instance, and also in the case of the south Indian vāriyams, those who bore the title of vārika were elected by others to serve for a specified period. And as the word vāra, from which vārika is apparently derived, has the meanings 'term', 'choice' and 'appointment',[5] it is possible that vārika originally meant a person elected to perform a certain duty. Thus on the strength of this interpretation it may be assumed that the navakarmavārika-bhikṣū was a group or a committee of monks elected by the community to be in charge of construction and repair work of the institution.

Two other seals from Nālandā bear the inscriptions

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1. M. Williams, Sanskrit-English Dictionary, 1889, p. 538.
2. E.I. XXX, 1953-1954, p. 179, l. 7; and Sircar, Ind. Ep. Gloss., p. 364.
3. Ibid., XXIII, 1935-1936, pp. 27-28.
4. Cf. pānīya-vārika; for more examples and a discussion see infra, p. 192
5. M. Williams, Sanskrit-English Dictionary, 1889, p. 943.

Śrī-Nālandāyaṁ caturbhagavad[ā]sanavārika-bhikṣūṇā[ṁ][1] and Śrī Nā [for Nālandā] Dharmapāladeva gandhakuṭī-vāsika-bhikṣūṇā[ṁ].[2] The first seal refers to a committee of monks in charge of the seat (shrine) of the four Buddhas. Probably they supervised the affairs of the shrine where the images of the four Dhyāni-Buddhas were kept for worship. The published text of the inscription on the second seal has to be translated as '[The seal] of the monks living at the Dharmapāladeva gandhakuṭī at Nālandā'. But there is a difficulty in accepting this reading. As gandhakuṭi[3] is a shrine where the Buddha images are kept, it is hard to believe that monks, too, were residing there. Nevertheless, this problem can be solved if we emend the phrase vāsika-bhikṣū in the published text to vārika-bhikṣū, and translate it as the committee of monks in charge of the Devapāladeva gandhakuṭi. Such a reading is not unwarranted, for the word vārika actually occurs in a similar context on another seal which bears the legend Śrī-Nālandā-[yāṁ]-Bālāditya-gandhakuḍī-vārika-bhikṣū[nāṁ].[4]

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1. Nālandā and Its Epigraphic Material, p. 38, seal No. S.I.919; also see note 3 for corrected reading of the inscription.

2. Ibid., p. 43, seal No. S.I.730 (Pl. IV,b).

3. Gandhakuṭī which literally means 'perfume-chamber' was originally used to mean the residence of the Buddha, but later on any shrine-room where a statue of the Buddha was kept was known as a gandhakuṭī. Cf. D.C. Sircar, Ind. Ep. Gloss., p. 111 and G.P. Malalasekera, Dictionary of Pali Propernames, London, 1937 (vol. I), p. 745.

4. Nālandā and Its Epigraphic Material, p. 38, seal No. S.I. 675 (Pl. III,a); see ibid., note 4 for the corrected reading.

This inscription may be translated as '[The seal] of the committee of monks in charge of the Bālāditya Gandhakuṭi'.

Another seal refers to a group of monks called 'Satraka-samavārika bhikṣū at Nālandā.[1] Although the meaning of vārika is clear, it is difficult to explain the precise meaning of samavārika. Perhaps the prefix sama was used to emphasize the equal powers of the members of the committee, exercised over the affairs of the sattra or the free-feeding house.

The basic functions represented by the titles of the groups or the committees of monks, as revealed from the above mentioned seals from Nālandā, remind us of somewhat similar titles and functions of monks mentioned in the Cullavagga of the Vinayapiṭaka, where the rudimentary form of monastic administration is found. Thus it is described how certain monks were appointed to be in charge of certain basic functions of the Saṁgha when the need arose. Monks were appointed for posts such as senāsanavārika[2] (regulator of lodgings), cīvarabhājaka[3] (distributor of robes), khādyakacāraka[4] (distributor of food), appamattavisajjaka[5] (distributor of trifles) and also navakammika[6] (monk in charge of new buildings and

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1. Nālandā and Its Epigraphic Material, p. 39, seal No. S.9, R, 91.
2. Vinayapiṭaka, IV, 4, 3.
3. Ibid., VI, 21.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid., VI, 5, 2.

repairs).[1]

The practice of appointing monks to carry out essential functions would have developed to cover various other activities when the Saṅgha began to adopt a more settled life in āvāsas. The appointment of monks for different other posts is mentioned in certain texts associated with northern Buddhism. For instance, the Divyāvadāna[2] speaks of pānīyavārika (monk in charge of drinkable water), bhājanavārika (monk in charge of vessels or utensils) and parisaṇḍavārika (monk in charge of gardens).[3]

How the original practice of appointing monks to carry out different monastic functions developed into a system in which such affairs were kept under the supervision of groups or committees of monks is not clear. However, the committee system was not completely unknown in monastic affairs. For instance, the Cullavagga[4] recommends it as an effective way of avoiding lengthy discussion in resolving disciplinary matters among the Saṅgha. Besides, the corporate nature of the constitution of the Saṅgha itself, must have paved the way for the practice of entrusting committees of monks with some monastic affairs. And with the expansion of monastic institutions

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1. For a discussion on the meaning of this term see supra, p. 188

2. Divyāvadāna, p. 342 ff.

3. For a discussion on these terms see, H. Kern, Manual of Indian Buddhism, Strassburg, 1896, pp. 83-84.

4. Vinayapiṭaka (Oldenberg ed.), II, pp. 95-97.

and the resulting increase in their functions, it would have become difficult for individual monks to attend to the needs of a large congregation. Hence, appointing committees of monks to be in charge of such affairs would have been an appropriate system for an efficient administration. Nālandā is the only monastic site that yielded such a wide range of seals belonging to different monastic institutions. It is however, difficult to believe that such a committee system was unique to Nālandā. Most probably other large monasteries with similar administrative responsibilities, too, had to devise some form of decentralized administrative machinery.

Though it is reasonable to assume that larger monasteries like Nālandā had an internal administration based on a committee system, there is hardly any evidence to ascertain precisely how these committees functioned or what the duties and responsibilities of their members were. It can, however, be said with certainty that these committees consisted of monks, but any positive evidence is not forthcoming as to the method or the terms of appointment.

Very little is also known about the other institutions, offices or individuals involved in the administration. From the records of the Chinese travellers it becomes clear that most of the larger monasteries in India during this period were under the abbotship of senior monks sometimes referred to as sthaviras.[1] The Gohsrawan

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1. Life of Hiuen-Tsang, pp. 69, 106 and 158.

Inscription[1] shows that Vīradeva, a learned monk from Nagarahāra,[2] was chosen by the Saṁgha to govern Nālandā. Probably in other monasteries, too, the chief incumbents were chosen by the resident monks. Yet it is not known whether this was done by the whole community of resident monks or only by those who were fully ordained. Hiuen-Tsang[3] observed that Satyabodhi, the head of Nālandā at his time, was very learned and, among the thousands of monks living there, he (Satyabodhi) alone was conversant with all sections of śāstras and sūtras. From I-tsing[4] we learn that Jñānacandra, the head of the Tilaḍa monastery near Nālandā, too, was a man of great wisdom and scholarship. Thus it is clear that attainment in scholarship was considered an essential qualification for those to be elevated to the headship of at least those larger monasteries that also served as centres of education.

It may be assumed that, though the chief incumbent or the director, according to I-tsing, was the head of the institution, his main concern was education at places like Nālandā. In actual practice it seems that it was the deputy incumbent who was chiefly responsible for the conduct and the overall supervision of most of the affairs of the institution. Both Hiuen-Tsang and I-tsing

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1. Ind. Ant. XVII, 1888, p. 310, l. 11; Nālandā-paripālanaya niyatah saṁgha-sthiter=yah sthitah.

2. Nagarahāra was a major Buddhist centre in north-western India by the time of Hiuen-Tsang, cf. On Yuan Chwang's Travels, I, pp. 182 ff.

3. Si-Yu-Ki, pp. 110-111.

4. Record of Buddhist Religion, p. 184.

refer to various administrative functions carried out by the deputy incumbent who is called 'wei-na' in Chinese.[1] This term has been translated and reconstituted as karmadāna.[2] However, karmadāna is not found in inscriptions nor is it used in any literary work. Therefore it is difficult to determine the exact Sanskrit word used to denote the deputy incumbent. When Hiuen-Tsang was admitted to the Nālandā monastery, it was the deputy incumbent who made the relevant announcement to the community.[3] According to I-tsing[4] it was the duty of this monk to announce the time, and the commencement of any service or ceremony, by striking a gong. I-tsing[5] also mentions that the deputy incumbent supervised monastic affairs; but it is not mentioned what particular affairs were meant. When speaking about the Makuṭa-bandhana monastery near Kusinārā, he states that its deputy incumbent supervised the preparation of food for the monks.[6] Whereas the 'wei-na' in larger monasteries was subordinate to the chief incumbent, in smaller monasteries it seems that this monk himself was the head of the institution. According to Hiuen-Tsang,[7] at a certain monastery in Magadha, by

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1. Record of Buddhist Religion, p. 148, note 1.
2. For a discussion see, J. Takakusu, Record of Buddhist Religion, pp. 148-49.
3. S. Beal, Life of Hiuen-Tsang, p. 106.
4. Record of Buddhist Religion, pp. 148-149.
5. Ibid., p. 84.
6. Ibid., p. 38.
7. Life of Hiuen-Tsang, pp. 96-97.

tradition, a sāmanera (a monk who was not fully ordained) was appointed as 'wei-na', and was also the chief incumbent. Though it was necessary in the larger monasteries to appoint two monks, one as the chief incumbent and the other as the deputy incumbent, perhaps it was not necessary to follow the same pattern in smaller monasteries as their administration was not so complicated.

Apart from the chief incumbent and his deputy, no other monastic official is mentioned in the records of the two Chinese travellers. It is also not clear whether any laymen were engaged in the internal administration of these large institutions in any official capacity, as was the case with certain contemporary Ceylonese monasteries.[1] The fact that the committees in charge of various administrative affairs, at Nālandā, consisted entirely of monks, strongly suggests that at least in this great monastery the basic internal administration was carried out by the resident monks themselves.

Among the Saṁgha, the learned and the senior monks were always treated with reverence. From the Chinese travellers we learn that the congregation of monks was presided over by the senior monks at their assemblies.[2] The heads of institutions, too, were chosen from amongst the most senior and the learned monks.[3] While discussing

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1. Cf. R.A.L.H. Gunawardhana, History of the Buddhist Saṅgha in Ceylon (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1965), pp. 136 ff.

2. Life of Hiuen-Tsang, p. 106.

3. See supra, p. 194

the arrangements made by the congregation for the disposal of the belongings of dead monks, I-tsing[1] mentions that if certain items of property in possession of the deceased were not sufficient for all the monks present at the assembly, it should be divided only among the elders.

On another occasion, I-tsing[2] states that the most learned among the Saṅgha and those who had mastered at least one of the Three Piṭakas, were given the best rooms in the monastery and were also provided with monastic servants. These monks enjoyed the privilege of being carried in sedan-chairs when they were travelling. I-tsing[3] further observes that, whenever such monks were entrusted with delivering lectures, they were relieved of their monastic duties. Thus it is evident that the learned monks were ... entrusted with some monastic administrative functions as well. But the most important fact that emerges from I-tsing's statement is that the learned and the most senior monks, at least in certain instances, enjoyed privileged positions. If the seniority and the degree of mastery over scriptures was considered important in the assignment of rooms, monastic servants and in other benefits, it is reasonable to assume that the same criterion was employed in the selection of monks for monastic appointments as well.

Except for the evidence from the Nālandā seals,

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1. Record of Buddhist Religion, p. 191.
2. Ibid., p. 64.
3. Ibid.

very little is known about the other administrative bodies or offices of the Buddhist monasteries. On the management of income of a monastery at Tāmralipti, I-tsing[1] remarks that there was no principal office to deal with the various items brought to the monastery by its tenants and when any matter occurred it was settled by the assembly. From this observation it would follow that, though there was no special office to deal with business arising from the property of this monastery, there were such offices in some other monasteries for such purposes. According to Hiuen-Tsang[2] two hundred householders from the villages that were under the control of Nālandā mahāvihāra, day by day, contributed several hundred piculs of rice and several hundred catties in weight of milk and butter. In order to handle large amounts of such items, there must have been special arrangements in most of the monasteries, though any positive evidence to this effect is hard to come by.

In referring to the general method of disposal of the belongings of deceased monks, I-tsing[3] states that, if money due on deeds and contracts entered into by the deceased was payable at once, it was to be realized immediately and distributed among the resident monks. Otherwise, the relevant deeds and contracts were to be preserved in the monastic treasury until such time as the

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1. Record of Buddhist Religion, p. 62.
2. Life of Hiuen-Tsang, pp. 112-113.
3. Record of Buddhist Religion, p. 192.

money fell due. This solitary reference in I-tsing's record is the only mention of monastic treasuries, though it is obvious that the treasury played an important part in the economic affairs of the monastery. However, it is clear from this reference that the documents pertaining to financial transactions were preserved in the treasury, but the procedure followed in connexion with the realization of money or the fulfilment of the contracts is not known. Nor is it possible to identify the monastic officials responsible for such matters arising from the financial affairs of the monasteries.

The majority of seals and sealings found at Nālandā were discovered in a single site which is marked as monastery no. 9 in archaeological reports. In this particular building more than 690 seals (most of them are in fact sealings) were found in a single chamber.[1] It may be conjectured that these sealings were attached to certain documents so as to prove their authenticity as documents issued by the various authorities. The fact that such a large number of seals was found in a single chamber led Hirananda Sastri to believe that this particular room must have been the record room of the establishment.[2] From the inscriptions on the sealings it becomes apparent that these sealings came from various authorities ranging from different administrative offices of the state to village councils, and from kings to individual monks,[3]

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1. Nālandā and Its Epigraphic Material, p. 36.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., pp. 26 ff.

and there is no doubt that such a large number of sealings issued by various individuals and institutions came to Nālandā as a result of extensive relations it maintained with outside bodies.

The evidence of seals and sealings throws welcome light on the relationship between the mahāvihāra, its villages and the subordinate monasteries. A fairly large number of sealings that refer to various villages bear the insignia and the name of the particular village and also the Dharmacakra symbol. As this symbol was distinctly used by the Nālandā monastery in all its seals, it is most probable that these sealings came from the villages that were under the control of the monastery. In fact, the legends on two village seals clearly state that those villages were attached (pratibaddha) to Nālandā.[1] Several other seals that carry village insignia also bear the legend Śrī-Nālandā-caturddiś-āryabhikṣusaṅghasya,[2] which is indicative of the authority of the mahāvihāra over those villages.

Eleven of these village seals actually refer to the janapadas of the villages. According to lexicons, janapada generally means 'a community', 'a nation of people of the countryside'.[3] Yet, none of these meanings suits the context of the legends on the Nālandā seals, as

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1. Ibid., p. 46 seal no. S.9, R.16 (Pl. IV, i) Śrī-Nālandā-prtīva (ba) ddha-Mammayikā (or Māluyikā) -grama-janapadasya ; ibid., p. 47, seal no. S.9, R. 144 (Pl. V, a).

2. Ibid., p. 41, seal no. S.I.348 (Pl. III, f).

3. M. Williams, Sanskrit-English Dictionary (1889), p. 410.

the janapadas are clearly mentioned as belonging to villages. However, it may be pointed out that Yājñavalkya[1] mentions janapada along with gaṇa and śreṇi, which are undoubtedly corporate institutions. K.P. Jayaswal,[2] pointing to the obvious difficulty in taking janapada to mean 'province' or 'a nation' in general, came to the conclusion that this word could also mean a corporate body. There is no difficulty in accepting this interpretation for the janapada in our inscriptions apparently meant an institution within the village. Hence it is quite likely that the janapadas referred to in the Nālandā seals, were village councils or similar institutions.

The appearance of the Dharmacakra symbol and the legend Śrī-Nālandā(mahāvihāra) -caturddiś-āryabhikṣu-saṅghasya which indicate the authority of the general assembly of monks, on the village seals, shows that the monastery made its authority felt even in the administrative affairs of the village council. This may also be interpreted as showing that the janapada of the village acted on behalf of the mahāvihāra. In other words, the authority of the Nālandā mahāvihāra over the villages was devolved on the janapadas of the individual villages.

A few other sealings found at Nālandā, though referring to various other monasteries, bear the Dharmacakra symbol which was the symbol of the Nālandā mahāvihāra.[3]

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1. Yājñavalkya, I, 360-361.

2. K.P. Jayaswal, Hindu Polity, Bangalore, 1955 (Third edition), pp. 230-235.

3. Nālandā and Its Epigraphic Material, p. 37, seal no. S.IA,455, p. 40, seal no. S.9, R. 15, p. 44, seal no. S.I, 1006 (Pl. IV, c), S.I. 1006 (Pl. IV, d).

The use of the Dharmacakra symbol on the seals of the other monasteries seems to indicate that those monasteries were either subordinate to Nālandā or were subsidiary institutions. Thus it is evident that the Nālandā mahāvihāra had a network of subordinate monasteries in different areas. Although we have no information about the administrative organization of these local monasteries, the reference in one of the seals to a janapada in the vihāra of the village Aṅgāmi (or Bhūtikā) which was attached to Nālandā,[1] is noteworthy. The phrase vihārastha-jānapadasya deserves particular attention. It clearly shows that this janapada was associated with the vihāra. On the interpretation we have suggested for janapada, it may be argued that janapada indicates the assembly of monks at the vihāra in this instance. Then the question arises why was it called janapada when the general assembly of monks in other vihāras is always denoted as bhikṣusaṅgha in the seals. Therefore, it is tempting to suggest that this particular janapada was a corporate body in the shape of the village janapadas or committees, designed to attend to the secular affairs of the monastery, as was the case with some contemporary Hindu temples and Ceylonese monasteries.

Hindu Religious Institutions

One important outcome of the emergence of

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1. Ibid., p. 47, seal no. S. 9, R. 144 (Pl. V, a), Śrī-Nālanda-pratibaddh-Āṅgami (Bhūtikā) grāma-vihārastha-janapadasya.

different religious sects from the orthodox Vedic religion was the establishment of religious institutions dedicated to the worship of individual deities. The establishment of such institutions no doubt gave rise to the establishment of administrative bodies to carry out their affairs, as was the case with the Buddhist monasteries. Though there is some evidence for the origin and the subsequent development of the administration of the Buddhist monasteries, hardly any evidence is available for the study of the origin or the evolution of the administrative set-up of the Hindu temple prior to the period under review.

A number of inscriptions from eastern India refer to the administration of certain Hindu temples and sometimes provide us with the names and official titles of those who were engaged in it. The Mundeśvarī Hill Inscription[1] of the time of Udayasena (year 30, possibly of the Harṣa era) from the Shahabad district of Bihar, reveals that the permission to build a maṭha attached to a temple of Nārāyaṇa (Viṣṇu) was sought by a certain Bhāgudalaṇa from the devanikāya of the said temple. The record further states that the request was made through a certain daṇḍanāyaka[2] Gomībhaṭa. The word devanikāya literally means 'an assembly or a council of gods'.[3] Both the

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1. E.I. IX, 1907-1908, p. 289, ll. 3-4.

2. Daṇḍanāyaka has been interpreted as 'he who wields the daṇḍa', and thus taken to mean a judge. It has also been interpreted as 'a high-ranking army officer'. Cf. D.C. Sircar, Ind. Ep. Gloss., s.v.

3. M. Williams, Sanskrit-English Dictionary, p. 1034.

Mahābhārata and the Manusmṛti[1] use this word in the above sense. If this meaning is accepted, it has to be understood that Bhāguḍalaṇa consulted the deities; and thus it would look like a mere religious ceremony. If it was a mere prayer to the deities it is difficult to explain why it was necessary for Bhāguḍalaṇa to make his request through daṇḍanāyaka Gomībhaṭa who was most probably a royal official. Therefore the general meaning of the 'council of gods' given for the term devanikāya makes no good sense in this context.

However, Rāghavānanda,[2] commenting on Manu, provides the alternative meaning of 'servants of a god'. This seems to be the most acceptable meaning in this context, and therefore, the relevant line in the inscription may be interpreted as implying that the permission to build the maṭha was sought from the council or the assembly of the servants of the god. Accordingly, it may be assumed that the devanikāya in this instance signifies a council or a committee of persons who managed the affairs of the establishment. Most probably, daṇḍanāyaka Gomībhaṭa was a member of this council for it was not uncommon for royal officials to serve as members of temple management.[3]

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1. Manu. 1. 36 and Mahābhārata (Ed. V.S. Sukthankar, vol. I, Poona 1933), p. 510, l. 114.37.

2. The Laws of Manu, S.B.E. XXV, 1886, p. 14, f.n. for l. 36; Manusmṛti with nine Commentaries (ed. by J.H. Dave), Bharatiya Vidya Series, no. 39, Bombay, 1972, p. 68, commentary on Manu. 1. 36, devasthalāni devabhṛtyanvā.

3. See infra, p.207

The Alagum Inscription[1] (1140/41 A.D.) of Coḍagaṅga, refers to the protectors of a temple of god Gartesvara (pallideva-pālitādhikārināṁ), but gives no information with regard to its administration. An inscription from Gaya,[2] dated in the gatarājya of Govindapāla and also in the year 1232 of the Vikrama era, records the names of eight persons who are described as pālanakārin or protectors of a matha of god Gadādhara (Viṣṇu). It is significant that though the inscription contains the names of several temple servants and brāhmaṇas, only those eight persons are described as pālanakārins.

Inscriptional evidence from other parts of northern India shows that the management of most of the Hindu religious establishments was in the hands of a committee, sometimes known as gosthī. For instance, the Mathura Praśasti[3] of the time of Vijayapāla furnishes the names of twelve persons who are described as the members of a gosthī (gosthī-jana) of a Vaiṣṇava temple. Likewise, a grant issued by the Cālukya sāmanta Jagamalla[4] in 1207 A.D., gives the names of eight gosthikas in two Śaiva temples, who were entrusted with the management of all affairs concerning the two institutions.[5] In south India, too,

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1. E.I. XXIX, 1951-52, p. 48, ll. 23-24.
2. Ibid., XXXV, 1963-1964, p. 238, ll. 5-11.
3. Ibid., I, 1892, p. 292, vv. 18-22.
4. Ind. Ant. XI, 1881, p. 338, ll. 3-6.
5. The word gosthī which literally means 'an abode for cattle' or 'a meeting place', has been interpreted by G. Bühler as 'a committee entrusted with the management of religious endowments', see E.I. I, 1892, p. 190.

/Continued over

most of the Hindu temples were managed by similar committees which were known by different names in different times.[1] On the basis of this evidence it is reasonable to assume that the eight persons who are called pālanakārins in the Gaya Inscription, too, were members of a similar committee which may have been in charge of the management of the matha of Gadādhara.

The available evidence from eastern India is of little help for a proper understanding of the composition or the exact functions of the committee of management. The Bhagalpur Plate of Nārāyaṇapāla (c. 866-920 A.D.) refers to a parisad of Pāśupata ācāryas at a Śaiva temple of Kalasapota. Though parisad generally means 'an assembly' or 'a congregation',[2] the Rājataraṅgiṇī[3] in many instances uses it in the sense of a corporate body consisting entirely of brāhmaṇas, and these institutions

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Footnote 5 continued from previous page.

Bhandarkar, too, accepting Bühler's interpretation, states that 'the word gosthī no doubt signifies a pañch or a committee entrusted with the management of religious endowments, ibid., IX, 1907-1908, p. 189.

1. T.V. Mahalingam, South Indian Polity, Madras, 1955, p. 376 and also see B. Stein, 'Economic Function of a Medieval South Indian Temple', Journal of Asian Studies, XXIX, 1959-1960, p. 164.

2. For various references to the use of parisad in this sense see K.P. Jayaswal, Hindu Polity, pp. 14, 16, 275, 277 and 278.

3. Rājataraṅgiṇī II, 132, VII, 13, 993, VIII, 900-906; also see M.A. Stein, Rājataraṅgiṇī (Eng. tr.), Westminster, 1900, note on II, 132.

were in charge of the management of the religious as well as the economic affairs of the Hindu temples of Kashmir. Yet, it is not certain whether the word parisad in the Bhagalpur Plate was used in the above sense or in its general meaning of 'assembly' or 'congregation', which could be used to denote all the brāhmaṇas who were residing there, irrespective of any possible involvement in the management of the institution.

However, several records from outside eastern India shed considerable light on certain aspects of the composition of the committee of management. The Vasantagadh Inscription[1] of Varmalāta (Vikrama era 682) contains a list of members of a gosthī of a temple dedicated to Durgā. Of these, three names deserve particular attention. One person is described as a pratīhāra[2] and another as a rājasthānīya. Although the exact meaning of the second title is not clear, it may be assumed that it indicated a royal official. But the most noteworthy among these three persons is a ganikā or a courtesan.[3] Similarly, one of the gosthikas of a Vaiṣṇava temple, mentioned in a grant of the time of Allaṭa (953 A.D.) of the Guhila dynasty of Mewar, was a Hūṇa.[4] According to a grant of the Cālukya sāmanta Jagamalla (1207 A.D.), one

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1. E.I. IX, 1907-1908, p. 192, ll. 13-16.

2. Pratīhāra generally means a door-keeper, but in ancient and mediaeval India this was the title of a high-ranking official, cf. Ind. Ep. Gloss., p. 259.

3. For the use of this term in the sense of a dancing girl see infra, p. 242

4. Ind. Ant., LVIII, 1929, p. 162, l. 8.

member of a gosthī of two Śaiva temples was a trader (vyavahārin).[1] This evidence clearly shows that at least in some Hindu religious establishments the membership of the committee of management was not restricted to brāhmaṇas.

Evidence from different parts of northern India suggests that the committee of management was generally entrusted with the management of the economic as well as the religious functions of the institutions. The Pehoa Inscription[2] of the time of Pratihāra Bhoja, stipulates that the taxes from horse-dealers, transferred to four temples, were to be collected and properly distributed among the establishments by the gosthī.[3] The Ahar Inscription (ninth-tenth century A.D.) from Uttara Pradesh contains the details of several transactions effected by the gosthī and another committee known as the sauvarṇika-mahājana of a temple of Kanakaśrīdevi. The gosthī, according to this record, using the money belonging to the temple, bought the lease of several house-sites and apartments (āvarakas). The sauvarṇika-mahājana, a body most probably subordinate to the gosthī also carried out similar transactions on behalf of the temple.

The above cited grant[4] of sāmanta Jagamalla,

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1. Ind. Ant. XI, 1881, p. 338, ll. 2-6.
2. E.I. I, 1892, pp. 187-188, ll. 16-17.
3. It is noteworthy that in this case a single gosthī was in charge of all four temples.
4. E.I. XIX, 1927-1928, pp. 52 ff. documents 1-10.

which records several endowments made to two Śaiva temples, mentions that the gosthī of the temples were entrusted with the supervision over all the functions of the institutions including that of protecting the establishments if necessary at the cost of their lives.

The Gayā Inscription,[1] dated in the gatarājya of Govindapāla, reveals that the monetary endowment made to a matha of Gadādhara was accepted by the pālanakārins i.e., as we have suggested, the committee of management of the institution. An additional line in the record shows that the interest accruing to the deposited money was paid at the end of the period of one year, for the purpose of feeding the brāhmaṇas of the matha, as was arranged.[2] The Alagum Inscription[3] of Anantavarman Coḍagaṅga, recording a similar endowment, states that a sum of 105 purāṇas was granted for the maintenance of a a perpetual lamp in the temple of Gartesvara. The money was actually handed over to those who were in charge of the protection of the village deity (pallī-deva-pālitādhikārinā[ṁ] [ha]ste prada[ttā]).[4] Thus it seems that the responsibility of the management of monetary endowments rested with the committee, and therefore it would follow that it was also the duty of the committee of management to use the interest from those deposits for the intended

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1. E.I. XXXV, 1963-1964, p. 238, ll. 5-11.
2. Ibid., l. 12.
3. Ibid., XXIX, 1951-1952, p. 48, ll. 23-24.
4. Ibid., ll. 23-24.

religious purposes.

Although this is the only available evidence with regard to the functions connected with the economic affairs of the committee of management of the Hindu religious establishments in eastern India, this by no means suggests that their responsibilities were limited to the management of monetary endowments. If the committee acted as trustees in charge of the monetary endowments and transferred the interest on the endowments to the mathas, it is quite obvious that the investment of that money in profit-earning enterprises, too, must have been their responsibility. As revealed from the Ahar Inscription the money belonging to the temple of Kanakaśrīdevi was invested by the committee of management on behalf of the temple. Besides, as has already been mentioned,[1] the permission to erect a matha attached to the temple of Nārāyaṇa, as recorded in the Mundeśvarī Hill Inscription, was granted by the committee of management. This shows that decisions regarding the expansion of the institutions or adding new units to it were taken by the committee. This further indicates that the authority of the committee was not limited to the management of economic affairs. Thus it may be surmised that the managing committees of the Hindu religious establishments in eastern India, like those of the Hindu temples of other regions,[2] exercised complete authority

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1. See supra, p.204

2. For different functions of the committees of management of some south Indian Hindu temples see, B. Stein, 'Economic Function of a Mediaeval South Indian Temple',

/Continued over

over the most important affairs of the institutions.

Apart from the references to those who were members of the committee of management, some inscriptions contain the titles of several other persons who seem to have been involved in the administration of certain Hindu religious establishments. The Puri Inscription[1] of Coḍagaṅga (1114/15 A.D.), which records a donation to a temple of Mārkāṇḍeśvara, mentions the names of two mudrāhastas, two pasāpālakas, two sāmmavājīs and one śrī karaṇa as those who witnessed the establishment of the endowment. Of these, mudrāhasta has been equated by D.C. Sircar,[2] with Oriya mudirata, the title of a class of servants of the Jagannātha temple of Puri. At present the mudiratas are a group of senior officials in the temple management who officiate for the Rajah of Puri in temple festivals.[3] Sircar's equation may be supported by the fact that in the current usage mudirata is sometimes referred to as mudirasta which is quite close to Sanskrit mudrāhasta.[4] It is quite possible that the

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Footnote 2 continued from previous page.

Journal of Asian Studies, XXXIX, 1959-1960, pp. 163-176. T.V. Mahalingam, South Indian Polity, Madras, 1955, p. 376 and A. Appadurai, The Economic Conditions of South India, vol. I, Madras, 1936, pp. 274-301.

1. E.I. XXXIII, 1959-1960, p. 185, ll. 7-9.

2. Ibid., p. 183 and Ind. Ep. Gloss., s.v.

3. K.C. Mishra, The Cult of Jagannatha, Calcutta, 1971, p. 223.

4. Ibid.

system of administration prevalent at that time in the temples of Puri had some influence on the administrative set-up of the Jagannātha temple. In that case, either the entire administrative system or, more probably, some parts of it would have been adapted to the administrative organization of the Jagannātha temple. Accordingly it may be argued that this could be the reason for the similarity between the titles of certain officials of the Mārkāṇḍeśvara temple mentioned in the present record and those of certain officials of the Jagannātha temple of today. However, merely because of the similarity of the two terms it need not be concluded that the functions of the mudrāhastas were similar to those of the present day mudiratas, for the present system of administration in the Jagannātha temple is the result of a long process of evolution.

The term mudrā-hasta may generally mean one who handles the mudrā, i.e. the person in charge of the seal. The use of seals in the administrative functions of religious establishments of this period is borne out by the large number of seals and sealings unearthed at several Buddhist and Hindu monastic sites.[1] Certain south Indian inscriptions, too, testify to the use of seals in the administration of Hindu temples. For instance, a copper plate in the Periyanāṭṭu matha[2] at Tiruvannamalai, mentions

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1. Cf. K.K. Thaplyal, Studies in Ancient Indian Seals, Lucknow, 1972, pp. 140-144 and pp. 262-264.

2. South Indian Temple Inscriptions, III, pt. 1, Madras Government Oriental Series, CXXXI, Madras, 1955, p. 1077.

the appointment of an officer to be in charge of the management of the matha, who was also given charge of the temple seal. On the basis of this evidence it seems quite likely that the mudrāhastas mentioned in the Puri Inscription, too, were in charge of temple seals. As we have seen earlier, the monastic seals from Nālandā were used to confer the authority of the establishment on documents; therefore the use of seals must have been an important aspect of the administrative machinery. Accordingly, if the mudrāhastas can be identified as officials in charge of temple seals, their presence on the occasion of the establishment of an endowment is quite natural.

Regarding the title pasāpālaka, Sircar opines that it may be the same official designation found in some inscriptions in the form of pasāyita, pasāita or pasāyati.[1] In his edition of the Siddhesvar Inscription of Narasiṁha IV (1349 A.D.) of the Eastern Gāṅga dynasty of Orissa, Sircar argues that pasāita should be derived from Sanskrit prasāda, which in Gujarāti took the form pasāya or pasāetuṁ to indicate land reserved for the maintenance of village artisans or for charitable and religious purposes.[2] If this interpretation is accepted, pasāpālakas mentioned in the Puri Inscription have to be taken to mean royal officials who were in charge of land assigned to artisans or to religious establishments. It

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1. E.I. XXXIII, 1959-1960, p. 183.
2. Ibid., XXIX, 1951-1952, p. 107.

may also be argued that if they were in charge of the land assigned to temples, they must have maintained close relations with the religious institutions concerned.

In this connexion it may also be noted that a class of servants of the Jagannātha temple of Puri, is known as paśupālaks whose duties included those of dressing the images of the deities, adorning them with flowers and performing the abakās pūjā.[1] Apparently the word pasāpālaka is very similar to paśupālak, and perhaps the former may be a mistake for the latter as this sort of an error on the part of the composer of the record or the scribe is not an uncommon feature in the records of this period, particularly of Orissa. Yet the duty of the paśupālaks at the Jagannātha temple, seems to include rather lowly functions when compared to the duty of the mudiratas. Therefore, merely because of the similarity of the terms it is difficult to explain the duties of the pasāpālakas on what we know about the present-day paśupālaks.

Though the literal meaning of paśupālaka is 'cowherd', it should be noted that this term occurs in an entirely different sense in the Cintra Praśasti of Sarangadeva of the Vāghela dynasty (thirteenth century A.D.) of Gujarat. This record, which enumerates various arrangements made for the maintenance of several pūjās at a Śaiva temple, stipulates that the paśupālaka (sometimes

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1. K.C. Mishra, The Cult of Jagannatha, Calcutta, 1971, p. 224.

spelt pasupālaka) should fetch the items necessary for the offerings to the deity from the temple treasury (kosthāgāra).[1] It was he who was responsible for the distribution of those items among the students who performed the pūjās.[2] Another duty of the paśupālaka (pasupālaka) was to lead the worship on the festival days, in particular Śivarātrī.[3] For these services to the temple he was paid fifteen drammas a month.[4] Thus it is clear that the paśupālaka was a temple official who performed important administrative as well as religious functions.

If pasāpālaka is a corrupt form of paśupālaka which is also spelt pasupālaka, it may be suggested on the above discussion that pasāpālakas were high-ranking temple officials whose main administrative duty was that of distributing the offerings needed for worship. The fact that it was the paśupālaka who fetched the offering items from the treasury shows that he was also associated with the temple treasury, and this may have been another reason why the presence of such an official on the occasion of the making of a monetary endowment was deemed necessary. However, it should be noted that the above interpretation is not without limitations. In the first place, the equation of pasāpālaka with paśupālaka is not

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1. E.I. I, 1892, pp. 271 ff., l. 56.
2. Ibid., l. 59.
3. Ibid., l. 61.
4. Ibid., l. 62.

conclusive. And even if this identification is accepted, the interpretation may be questioned on the ground of possible regional variation of the meaning of the same term.

Commenting on the term sāṁmavājī Sircar[1] states that this term may be a mistake for somayājin which he elsewhere translates as 'one who has performed somayāga'.[2] But it can also be argued that sāṁmavājī may be a mistake for sāmavedin which is the designation of a class of brāhmaṇas attached to Hindu temples. For example, a Cōḷa record from the Saptamātrikā temple[3] (Kolar Taluq, Karnatak) mentions Sāmavedī brāhmaṇas along with Ṛgvedī and the Yajurvedī brāhmaṇas as those who received emoluments from the temple for performing the navahoma rituals at the temple.

On the other hand, it may be pointed out that the term sāmavājī which is most probably the same as sāṁmavājī, is found in several contemporary Orissan inscriptions. The Ganjam Plate[4] of Pṛthivīvarmadeva mentions sāmavājī in the list of royal officials and other persons addressed in the grant where, however, it figures as the last on the list. It also occurs in the usual list of addressees in the Ganjam Plate of Daṇḍīmahādevī.

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1. E.I. XXXIII, 1959-1960, p. 185.
2. Ind. Ep. Gloss., p. 315 and p. 291.
3. Epigraphia Carnatica, I, 1905, Inscriptions of the Kolar District, p. 40, ll. 22-25. Also see, R.N. Nandi, Religious Institutions and Cults in the Deccan, Delhi, 1973, pp. 24-25.
4. E.I. IV, 1896-1897, p. 200, l. 11.

This inscription describes sāmavājīs as chiefs or heads of people (sāmavājī-pramukha-nivāsino).[1] The Kudopali Grant[2] of Mahāśivagupta II, on the other hand, mentions them along with the rājaputras and the talavargikas who are again at the end of the list, a fact that indicates their low rank. From this discussion it seems that the sāmavājīs were a class of petty royal officials or perhaps village chieftains. As shown earlier, the participation of royal officials in temple administration was well known in this period.

Śrīkarana is the other person mentioned among the witnesses to the endowment recorded in the Puri Inscription of Codagaṅga.[3] This is normally the designation of the king's scribe or secretary. In this instance, it is obvious that śrīkarana was used to denote the temple scribe, possibly the chief scribe. The Paschimbhag Copper Plate[4] of Śrīcandra mentions kāyasthas among the servants of nine maṭhas, who received land allotments. Kāyastha is the designation of a particular caste,[5] and some lexicons[6] mention it as a synonym of karana. Contemporary inscriptions, too, use both terms

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1. E.I. VI, 1900-1901, p. 138, l. 27.
2. Ibid.
3. See supra, p. 211
4. E.I. XXXVII, 1968, p. 303, l. 38 and p. 304, l. 46.
5. Cf. D.C. Sircar, 'Kayastha', Bhāratīya Vidyā, X, 1949, pp. 280-285.
6. Amarakośa, III, 54. Vaijayantī III, 9, 22.

to mean a scribe.[1] According to the Rājatarangiṇī[2] some of the kāyasthas in royal service were engaged in the collection of taxes. The Paschimbhag Copper Plate[3] mentions gaṇaka along with kāyasthas. Presumably the temple accountant was meant by the term gaṇaka.[4]

As shown earlier, the duties of the scribes of the Nālandā mahāvihāra included that of the preparation of records of endowments made in favour of the institution. This may well have been one of the functions of the scribes of other religious institutions as well. Naturally, at the time when the endowment recorded in the Puri Inscription was made, the presence of the temple scribe must have been essential as the drafting of the grant was an integral part of the procedure.

The new developments that took place in the field of Hindu religious ideas, particularly from the Gupta period onwards, resulted in putting stronger emphasis on the ritualistic aspect of religious life. Apart from this factor, most of the religious institutions, by virtue of the vast resources which had come into their possession as a result of munificent donations, were economically in a sound position to perform elaborate and elegant religious rituals and festivals. This in turn necessitated the

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1. Ind. Ep. Gloss., p. 318; and E.I. XXXIII, 1959-1960, p. 183.
2. Rājataraṅgiṇī, IV, 623.
3. E.I. XXXVII, 1968, p. 303, l. 38 and p. 304, l. 46.
4. For instances where this term was used to denote temple accountant see S.I.I. II, 1916, pp. 313 ff., ll. 1 ff.

employment of not only a large number of ordinary brāhmaṇas but also of those with special knowledge of different aspects of religious rituals.

According to early Muslim records, at the famous Somnāth temple of Gujarat alone there were 2,000 brāhmaṇas who seem to have worked on a shift basis.[1] From several south Indian records, too, it becomes evident that brāhmaṇas who had special knowledge of various religious functions were employed at Hindu temples. However, very little is known about the specific functions of the brāhmaṇas attached to Hindu temples in eastern India though it is apparent that these temples, too, had performed similar religious functions like their counterparts in other areas.

In a preceding discussion[2] we pointed out that one possible meaning of the term sāmmavāji mentioned in the Puri Plate of Coḍagaṅga, is/a brāhmaṇa who is an expert in the Sāmaveda. And on the other hand, as D.C. Sircar thinks, it may also be taken to mean a brāhmaṇa who performs somayāga. If either of these interpretations could be accepted it suggests that there were at least two brāhmaṇas who served the temple as sāmavedins or as somayājins. The same record refers to some pūjāhāris who were the donors of the grant made to the Mārkāṇḍeśvara temple.[3] They were Hari and Vandau, two pūjāhāris of

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1. Elliot and Dawson, The History of India as Told by Its Own Historians, IV, London, 1866-1877, p. 180.

2. See supra, p.216.

3. E.I. XXXIII, 1959-1960, p. 183 and also see supra, p.211

the god Mārkaṇḍeśvara, and Vāsu, a pūjāhāri of another god whose name appears to be Kohrineśvara. This record does not reveal what the precise functions of these pūjāhāris were. But the word pūjāri, which is the same as pūjāhāri, is used in some south Indian records to mean 'a priest' or 'a brāhmaṇa who performs pūjās at a temple'.[1] Thus it could be used to denote any temple priest.

A fragmentary inscription[2] from Bhubaneswar of the time of Anantavarman Codagaṅga refers to a devakarmin names Śrī Rāma.... Because of the fragmentary nature of the record it is difficult to determine the exact relevance of this devakarmin to the endowment or his precise function in relation to the religious establishment to which the donation was made. He may have been the donor. D.C. Sircar while editing the inscription, thinks that devakarmin possibly means a 'priest'.[3] In his Epigraphical Glossary,[4] Sircar identifies this term with Tamil tevār-kaṇmi or devakaṇmi, and equates it with the term pūjāri. Accordingly, he provides the meanings 'temple servant', 'temple priest', 'servant of god' and 'officer in charge of the temple affairs'. E. Hultzsch,[5] too, equates devakaṇmi with pūjāri and translates it as 'temple servant' and 'temple manager'.

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1. Ind. Ep. Gloss., p. 265.
2. E.I. XXX, 1953-1954, p. 32, l. 7.
3. Ibid., p. 31.
4. Ind. Ep. Gloss., p. 88.
5. S.I.I. III, 1929, p. 44 and p. 228.

Though we have no direct evidence from eastern India with regard to the precise duties of devakarmins, several south Indian inscriptions provide valuable information about the functions of devakaṇmis in south Indian temples. A ninth-century inscription[1] from the central shrine of the Ghritasthāneśvara temple at Tillasthanam mentions devakaṇmi along with the assembly and the villagers or the village council (ūr) as those who were responsible for the selling of some temple land. An inscription[2] of the time of Parāntaka Cōḷa from the Abhirameśvara shrine at Tiruvamattur also stipulates that the council (of the temple?) vāriyam, the village council or the villagers (ūr) and the devakaṇmis should protect a monetary endowment created for the purpose of maintaining a lamp at the temple. A pillar Inscription[3] from the Ujjivanāthasvāmin temple at Uyyakkondan, Tirumalai, mentions that the devakaṇmis of the temple, having accepted ninety ewes from a certain Sembiya Mārayan, agreed to maintain a perpetual lamp at the shrine. In a fourteenth-century lithic record[4] from the Rājrājeśvara shrine at Kanchipuram, a certain devakaṇmi is mentioned among the signatories to a deed confirming the sale of some houses owned by the shrine. From this record it is apparent that other signatories were the members of the

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1. S.I.I. III, 1929, p. 264, ll. 4-8.
2. Ibid., p. 228, ll. 2-5.
3. Ibid., p. 230, ll. 3 ff.
4. Ibid., I, p. 122, ll. 75-76.

committee of temple management. It is therefore reasonable to assume that the devakanmi mentioned therein was also an important temple official. From all the above evidence it becomes clear that the devakanmis occupied an important place in the administrative machinery, particularly with regard to the economic affairs of the temples. If they were not chief priests it is likely that they were at least senior temple officials who were most probably brāhmaṇas.

According to the Gaya Inscription[1] dated in the gataraājya of king Govindapāla (also dated Vikrama saṃvat 1232), the person who created a monetary endowment at the maṭha of Gadābṛt (Gadādhara) at Gayā, was a gu[g]gulin named Vidyādhara. And he is further described as a brāhmaṇa of the Vāsiṣṭha gotra. As D.C. Sircar[2] points out guggulu is a kind of fragrant gum-resin which is burnt in temples during rituals. Therefor guggulin may be taken to mean a person who burns guggulu at a temple. Thus it is evident that while certain brāhmaṇas served as priests and teachers, there were others who performed 'less important' duties such as the burning of incense. From the Malkapuram (Andhra Pradesh) Pillar Inscription[3] of Rudradeva, we learn that brāhmaṇas were employed at religious institutions to serve

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1. E.I. XXXV, 1963-1964, p. 238, ll. 4-9.
2. Ibid., p. 236.
3. Jour. Andhra Hist.Res. Soc. IV, 1929 , p. 160, ll. 54 ff.

as cooks and also to perform miscellaneous other tasks.

As education was one of the major functions of the maṭhas these institutions had to obtain the service of teachers with special knowledge in different disciplines. Naturally, the study of different branches of the Veda was given strong emphasis in the educational system followed at the maṭhas. As mentioned in the Paschimbhag Copper Plate,[1] there were eight teachers who expounded the four Vedas at the eight maṭhas, and each of them received ten pāṭakas of land for their service. According to the same record another ten pāṭakas of land were allotted to a teacher at the maṭha of god Brahmā, for the exposition of the Cāndra. Cāndra in this instance, is probably an abbreviation of Cāndra Vyākaraṇa, the famous Sanskrit grammar by Candragomin. Among all the employees of the nine maṭhas who received land allotments mentioned in the grant it is interesting to note that these teachers were the only persons to receive the highest emoluments of ten pāṭakas. There is no doubt that the education given at the maṭhas was not limited to the Vedas and grammar. For instance, the Malkapuram Inscription[2] (Andhra Pradesh) informs us that a large number of brāhmaṇa teachers were employed at the Golaki maṭha to teach various subjects such as the Vedas, grammar, logic literature and philosophy.[3]

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1. E.I. XXXVII, 1968, p. 303, ll. 42-43.
2. Jour. Andhra Hist. Res. Soc. IV, 1929/p. 160, ll. 49-51.
3. For a detailed discussion see infra, p.268

Nothing definite is known about the method or the terms of appointment of officials in the Hindu religious establishments in eastern India. Some inscriptional evidence from other parts of India shows that in certain instances, officials of Hindu religious establishments were appointed by the king. From the Sasbāhu Temple Inscription[1] we learn that the Pratīhāra king Mahīpāla appointed all the brāhmaṇa officials including the chief brāhmaṇa of the temple. Certain south Indian records that contain details of the appointment of temple officials inform us that it was the king who sometimes laid down rules governing the procedure of making appointments. For instance, a Tanjore inscription[2] contains a royal order stipulating that different village assemblies should send clerks, accountants, watchmen, etc., to serve at the temple. From another record at the same temple it becomes clear that certain appointments of the temple were hereditary and the land assigned to such persons for their service was to be passed on to the relatives of the appointees at their demise.[3]

Though there is no such information from the region under consideration, a record from the adjoining region of Sirpur (in eastern Madhya Pradesh) provides some valuable information with regard to certain aspects of the procedure of appointment of brāhmaṇas to temple

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1. Ind. Ant. XV, 1886, p. 36, v. 71.
2. S.I.I. II, 1916, p. 313 ff., ll. 1 ff.
3. Ibid., p. 300, ll. 449-450 and ibid., p. 229, l. 427.

duties. The Sirpur Inscription[1] of Mahāśivagupta Balārjuna, which records an endowment of five villages to a Vaiṣṇava temple at Śrīpura (identified as modern Sirpur), states that one-fourth of the income from land was to be assigned to fifteen brāhmaṇas, twelve of whom were experts in the Ṛg-, Yajur- and Sāma-Vedas. The other three brāhmaṇas were a certain puṇyāhavācaka[2] and two bhāgavatas. The record further mentions that their sons and grandsons who succeed them should know the six supplements of the Vedas and should not be addicted to gambling, prostitution and such other bad practices. And they should not be servants (of others).[3] If one does not answer to this description or if one of the brāhmaṇas dies sonless, other brāhmaṇas who had the above qualifications were to be appointed in their place. He should be their relative, advanced in age while being learned.[4] From the guidance laid down in the inscription it is evident that these appointments were hereditary and thus the sons and grandsons of the holders, with suitable qualifications, had the right to fill the vacant posts. Yet again, the emphasis is laid on virtuous character and learning. The record goes on to say that when new

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1. E.I. XI, 1911-1912, p. 192, vv. 28-30 and v. 34.

2. Hiralal translates this term as 'the brāhmaṇa who at sacrifices, declares holidays', but H. Krishnasastri renders it as 'a priest who officiates in all auspicious ceremonies and proclaims, by certain mantras, a happy day to the ceremony and its performer. See ibid., p. 197, n. 1.

3. Ibid., p. 192, v. 31.

4. Ibid., v. 32.

appointments are made, such persons should be appointed of their own free will, and not by order of the king.[1]

Here the consent of the person to be appointed has been considered important. It is significant that the record is very precise on the point that the brāhmaṇas should not be ordered by the king to accept posts in the temple. This on one hand, implies that at least in some cases brāhmaṇas were forced by royal orders to accept such appointments, and thus indirectly supports our previous conclusion that some appointments were made by the kings themselves. On the other hand, in this instance the right of the individual brāhmaṇas to accept or reject the offer of an appointment has been honoured. Above all, what is perhaps more important from the administrative point of view is the degree of autonomy the institution enjoyed with regard to its internal administrative affairs.

Although several grants made in favour of Hindu religious establishments specify that some share of income was to be set apart for the maintenance of brāhmaṇas and officials in the service of deities, the Paschimbhag Copper Plate[2] of Śrīcandra is the only record from eastern India that contains at least some precise information as to the payments made to temple officials. From this inscription we learn that officials as well as other employees of the nine maṭhas were allotted nearly four hundred pāṭakas of land out of a grant of 540 pāṭakas made

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1. E.I. XI, 1911-1912, pp. 192-193, v. 33.
2. Ibid., XXXVII, 1968, pp. 295-297.

over to these institutions. Though the record mentions the exact area of land allotted to each employee - the details of which are given elsewhere[1] - it does not necessarily mean that separate plots of land were given to each of them. It is very much probable that in this case, the nine mathas were granted only the right to receive various dues that the king had previously been collecting.[2] Thus it is apparent that the mathas, having received the income from the land, paid their employees in cash or in kind as specified in the document.

Collection of Revenue

The endowment of land as well as various other sources of revenue to religious establishments naturally raises the question as to what particular methods were followed in the collection of income, and who were responsible for it. The majority of land grants, as has been shown in a previous chapter, concerned entire villages, and the rights of the institutions were often limited to the collection of taxes and other dues. In such circumstances it is quite probable that the system of revenue administration that existed before the endowment of the village continued to function even after the transfer. Such an assumption would receive considerable support from certain grants such as that recorded in the Paschimbhag

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1. See supra, p.223 and infra, pp.236-237

2. See infra, p.228

Copper Plate[1] which stipulates that a vast area of land, covering more than three administrative divisions (visayas), was donated to nine mathas. In this case it is highly unlikely that the authority over the collection of taxes and the relevant administrative functions, too, were transferred to the mathas thereby bringing all the officials in the revenue administration of the area under their control. There is no indication in the record to suggest that such changes were made in the administration. Moreover, as is revealed from the record, the administrative organization of these mathas was not large enough to assume such responsibilities. Hence what seems to have been the actual arrangement is that the revenue from the land was collected as had been done in the past, but instead of being sent to the royal treasury it was made over to the mathas.

However, according to a statement in Hiuen-Tsang's account,[2] two hundred householders of the villages that belonged to the Nālandā monastery contributed several hundred piculs of rice and several hundred catties of butter and milk to the monastery every day. These supplies were meant for the use of the inmates. In a similar statement I-tsing[3] mentions that when he first visited a monastery near Tāmralipti, he observed that some tenants of the institution, having brought some

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1. E.I. XXXVII, 1968, pp. 303-304.
2. Life of Hiuen-Tsang, pp. 112-113.
3. Record of Buddhist Religion, p. 62.

vegetables they had produced to the monastic premises, divided the vegetables into three parts, one of which was handed to the monks. These two statements seem to suggest that the share of produce to which these institutions were entitled was carried to the monastic precincts by the tenants and was subsequently handed over to the monastic authorities. Also, by implication this would mean that in such cases, the service of revenue collectors was not required. It should, however, be added that Hiuen-Tsang's statement does not specify what kind of arrangement had been made for the collection of revenue from the villages. It is also possible that this statement applied to some special arrangement that had been made to ensure the regular supply of rice and ghee, which were essential items required for daily consumption, rather than to the normal method of revenue collection.

As to the passage in I-tsing's account, it is difficult to ascertain whether the tenants mentioned in it were share-croppers on mastic land or ordinary residents of a village belonging to the monastery. In the first case, it would suggest that no particular officials were employed to collect the share of produce from the land over which the monastery had some property rights. Such arrangements would cause no problems if all the land belonging to these institutions was situated in their close vicinity. But, as we have shown in a separate discussion,[1] in many cases the land owned by religious

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1. See supra, pp.143-144

institutions was not situated in close proximity. In certain instances, land allotments made over to religious foundations, were scattered over several administrative divisions. In such circumstances the collection of revenue from land, particularly in cases where the religious establishments enjoyed property rights, had to be carried out by the individual institutions.

Some epigraphic evidence from south India clearly shows that, in certain instances, the collection of revenue from villages belonging to Hindu temples was the task of temple officials. A tenth-century inscription[1] from Tirukkakkarai, Travancore district, mentions a certain ulppādan and a perumudiyan as two officials who collected dues from temple land. Another inscription[2] from the same place states that a certain perumudyan, a devānapādan and a poduvāl were appointed to collect from the tenants the rice earmarked for the maintenance of pūjās at a Vaiṣṇava temple. There can be no doubt that all the above mentioned terms indicate temple officials. R.A.L.H. Gunawardhana[3] has pointed out that at least some of the tasks connected with the collection of taxes from landed property of the Buddhist monasteries in Ceylon was passed over to middlemen. He also produced evidence to

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1. Travancore Archaeological Series, II, 1916, p. 43, ll. 2-3.

2. Ibid., p. 43, ll. 1-2.

3. R.A.L.H. Gunawardhana, History of the Buddhist Saṅgha In Ceylon (unpublished Ph.D. thesis), University of London, 1965, pp. 175-177.

suggest that it was an established practice for the monastic officials to go on administrative tours to monastic villages. From this evidence it is apparent that both in south India and in Ceylon the collection of revenue from villages belonging to religious establishments was carried out, at least in certain instances, by the institutions themselves.

According to the Pehoa Inscription[1] (882/83 A.D.) a number of horse-dealers who gathered at Pehoa agreed to impose upon themselves and upon their customers certain dues which were to be distributed among four temples. The record further stipulates that these dues from the horse-dealers were to be collected by the gosthikas who were responsible for distributing it among the four establishments. It appears that these gosthikas were responsible for the management of the affairs of all four temples. A stray plate from Nanana[2] states that the produce or the income (utpatti) of a village belonging to a temple of god Candaleśvara was to be collected by the vārikas of god Tripurisa i.e. the temple of god Tripuruṣa, as a part of their own collection, and that the expenses for the training, food, etc., of the dancing girls of the god Candaleśvara, as well as the other expenditure of the deity were to be met out of the income from the village.

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1. E.I. I, 1892, p. 188, ll. 16-17.

2. Ibid., XXXIII, 1959-1960, p. 244, ll. 3-5. The village of Nanana is situated near Marwar in Rajasthan, and the record belongs to the middle of the eleventh century.

Here the collection of income from the village belonging to one temple was carried out by the vārikas of another temple. One possible explanation is that the temple of god Caṇḍaleśvara was under the control of the temple of god Tripuruṣa.

The most important fact that emerges from the contents of this inscription is that the collection of revenue from the village was done by vārikas of the temple. As we pointed out in a previous discussion,[1] when the term vārika occurs in connection with the administration of religious establishments, it often meant some elected official, possibly a member of a committee. Unfortunately, the present record does not help us to determine the exact official status of the vārikas mentioned therein. It is, however, more probable that they were either some persons concerned with the management of the institution or a group of temple officials.

The term vārika also occurs in the list of employees of the eight maṭhas, mentioned in the Paschimbhag Copper Plate[2] of Śrīcandra. It is evident from this inscription that there were four vārikas for the eight maṭhas, and each of them was given one and a half paṭakas of land. It is noteworthy that in the list the vārikas are mentioned along with officials of the maṭhas, such as the chief brāhmaṇa (mahattara-brāhmaṇa), the kāyastha and the gaṇaka.[3] Though one and a half

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1. See supra, pp. 188-189
2. E.I. XXXVII, 1968, p. 304, l. 46.
3. Ibid., ll. 46-47 and also see supra, p. 218

pāṭakas of land received by each vārika is somewhat less than the allotments of other officials such as the mahattara-brāhmaṇa and the kāyastha who received two and a half pāṭakas respectively, his was certainly a high emolument when compared to that of the gaṇaka who received one pāṭaka. The comparatively high emolument received by the vārikas and the fact that these persons are mentioned along with the officials of the institutions strongly suggest that they, too, served in some official capacity. Yet it is not clear what their exact duties were or whether they were elected officials who had to serve the institutions for a specified period. If it is possible to identify the term vārika of the Paschimbhag Plate with the same term in Stray Plates from Nanana, it may be suggested that the collection of revenue was one of the duties of the vārikas of the eight maṭhas. However, there is no other evidence for such an identification except the similarity of the terms and the fact that the vārikas in both cases seem to have been associated with the administration of the institutions.

In the discussion[1] on the administrative organization of the Buddhist monasteries it became clear that the Nālandā monastery had a number of regional monasteries under its control. At the same time we saw that Nālandā had conferred upon the village councils

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1. See supra, pp.201-202

known as janapadas, some authority over the administration of villages. At least in one instance one of the janapadas was associated with the monastery of the village (vihāratha-janapada). Considering the large number of villages and other sources of revenue belonging to institutions like Nālandā it is quite likely that the management of that property could not have been carried out directly by the central institution. Therefore a better solution for this problem would be the devolution of some authority to institutions that were located in the vicinity of the property. In such circumstances the closely connected network of subordinate institutions could have been successfully made use of for this purpose.

The Labour Force

The religious establishments required, in addition to the administrative staff, the teachers and priests, the service of a considerable number of other servants for certain specific duties as well as for manual work. Among the major concerns of these institutions was the maintenance of their buildings in good repair. Though, on certain occasions, the renovation work and the construction of new buildings were carried out by pious patrons, this was generally considered one of the major responsibilities of individual establishments. The emphasis laid on the necessity of repairs and new construction is best illustrated by the fact that these

functions loom large among the main purposes for which most of the endowments were made.[1] As a result, most of the temples and monasteries possessed substantial resources which they could utilize for normal repairs and regular maintenance of their buildings without outside help except in special circumstances.

From a very early stage the Buddhist Saṁgha used to have a monk in charge of renovation and the construction of additional buildings.[2] We have already noticed that at the Nālandā monastery these functions had been kept under the supervision of a committee of monks.[3] It is likely that non-Buddhist religious establishments too, had to make similar arrangements to attend to construction work and repairs. Though any detailed information as to how these functions were organized or carried out is lacking, the Paschimbhag Inscription of Śrīcandra contains some information on certain artisans who seem to have been associated with building construction and repairs of the maṭha of god Brahmā. The inscription while giving details of land allotments made to the employees of the maṭha, mentions that two masons (sthapati), two carpenters (sūtradhāras) and two blacksmiths (karmakāras) who each received two pāṭakas of land. According to the same record, two potters received half a pāṭaka each.[4]

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1. See supra, p. 98
2. See supra, p. 191
3. See supra, p. 189
4. E.I. XXXVII, 1968, p. 303, ll. 40-41.

Though the basic duty of the potters may have been the supply of earthenware and such other utensils, evidence from a Bhubaneswar inscription of the time of Anaṅgabhīma III (1239 A.D.) shows that the service of potters was required in the building work as well. It records that a certain Govindasenāpati, having carried out repairs (jīrnoddhāra) of a maṇḍapa dedicated to god Kṛttivāsa or Śiva, donated five vāṭis of land to provide for the maintenance of the maṇḍapa.[1] Of the five vāṭis of land, two were allotted to a potter (kumbhakāra) for repairing the roof once in twelve years.[2] Presumably, in this case, the potter was expected to provide the necessary tiles for repairs or for replacements. This inscription further states that two vāṭis of land were also given to the lime-maker (cūrṇakāra) for white-washing the building once a year. According to a fragmentary inscription on a stone stūpa found at Nālandā, the stūpa was made by the sculptors (śilpin) of the monastery.[3] If sculptors were employed to make stone stūpas, it is possible that their service was used for architectural purposes as well. Similarly the service of other artisans such as carpenters and blacksmiths would also have been made use of in the manufacturing of tools, furniture, metal equipment, etc.

As music and dancing were considered essential

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1. E.I. XXX, 1953-1954, p. 23, ll. 5-12.
2. Ibid., ll. 7-8.
3. Nālandā and Its Epigraphic Material, p. 86, l. 3.

for daily worship and other rituals, the Hindu temples required the service of musicians and dancers on a full-time basis. Though numerous south Indian inscriptions refer to arrangements made for the performance of music and dancing at Hindu temples, a relatively small number of records from eastern India throw light on this aspect. Even such information is largely limited to the assignment of dancing girls to temples.[1] However, the Paschimbhag Copper Plate provides some details about the arrangements made for the performance of music and dancing at a maṭha of god Brahmā. According to this inscription there were seventeen musicians attached to the maṭha. The band consisted of five persons who played on the drum called kāhalā (kāhalika), two conch-shell blowers (śaṁkhāvādaka), two persons who played on the big drum called ḍhakkā (ḍhakkāvādaka) and eight persons who played on the kettle drum (drāgaḍa). Each of these musicians was allotted half a pāṭaka of land.[2]

The record also refers to a male dancer (naṭa) who received two pāṭakas.[3] He is the only dancer mentioned here though it is more probable that there should have been more dancers who served the maṭha, a place where a band of seventeen musicians had been employed. It may be pointed out that in some south Indian

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1. See supra, p.95
2. E.I. XXXVII, 1968, p. 303, ll. 39-40.
3. Ibid., l. 40.

records that contain details of arrangements made for dancing at Hindu temples, only one male dancer is usually mentioned along with the dancing girls, and he was the dancing instructor or the head of the dancing troupe.[1] In the Paschimbhag Plate mention is made of eight ceṭikās among the temple employees who received land allotments.[2] Ceṭikā or ceṭi is normally used in the sense of 'maid-servant',[3] but according to a thirteenth-century inscription from Gayā, ceṭis and bhavānis performed dancing and singing at a Buddhist monastery there.[4] From this it is evident that although the ceṭis were primarily maid-servants, they were also employed as dancers and songstresses. In the light of this evidence it is tempting to suggest that the only male dancer mentioned in the Paschimbhag Plate was the dancing instructor and the ceṭikās were perhaps employed as dancing girls as well. The high emolument received by the male dancer also supports the supposition that he was a dancing instructor.

Though music and dancing were important elements in Hindu religious worship such 'sensual gratification' had no place in early Buddhist tradition. In the course of time, however, particularly with the development of various Buddhist rituals and ceremonies, restrictions on

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1. S.I.I. II, 1916, p. 297, ll. 404-408.
2. E.I. XXXVII, 1968, p. 303, l. 41.
3. M. Williams, Sanskrit-English Dictionary (1899), p. 401.
4. Ind. Ant. X, 1881, p. 344, v. 12.

musical entertainment seem to have relaxed; and there is evidence to suggest that the use of instrumental music was a well-established practice during the period under review. Fa-hsien,[1] in the early fifth century A.D., observed that in Indian monasteries, bands of musicians played at ceremonies that took place during the rainy season. From I-tsing[2] we learn that music was performed at some other ceremonies as well. According to him bands of girls played music during the image-bathing ceremony which was carried out every day.

Any direct evidence for the performance of dancing at Buddhist monasteries, however, is found only in a thirteenth-century record. As we pointed out earlier in a different context, a Gaya inscription[3] dated in the year 1813 of the era of the Buddha parinirvāṇa, which most probably corresponds to 1270 A.D., mentions that some ceṭis[4] and bhavānis[5] performed dancing and music at a monastery - a practice quite similar to the devadāsī system of the Hindu temples. In this connexion certain evidence that may be deduced from the Ratnagiri Plates (Orissa) of the Somavaṁśi king Karṇa, merits discussion.

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1. H.A. Giles, Travels of Fa-hsien, p. 22.
2. Record of Buddhist Religion, pp. 147-148.
3. Ind. Ant. X, 1881, p. 344, v. 12.
4. For an interpretation of this term see supra, p.238
5. On the words bhavāni and ceṭi, Bhagavan Lal Indraji states that bhavanis are dancing girls attached to temples and ceṭis are maid-servants who perform menial services as well as join with the bhavānis in singing. Ind. Ant. X, 1881, p. 341.

This inscription which belongs to the early years of the twelfth century A.D., records the grant of a village by the king to a certain Rāṇī Karpūraśrī who is described as the daughter of mahāri Māhūṇadevi and as the pautrī of Udayamatī. And Karpūraśrī is further described as hailing from Saloṇapura mahāvihāra or the great monastery of Saloṇapura.[1] Commenting on this record, D.C. Sircar[2] inclines to take the word pautrī in the sense of 'daughter's daughter' and argues that in the absence of reference to Karpūraśrī's father or paternal grandfather, and the mention of her mother and the maternal grandmother instead, suggests that she was born of a harlot. He cites similar occasions where harlots were represented in their maternal line.[3]

Moreover, Sircar points out that the epitaph mahārī given to Karpūraśrī's mother 'is undoubtedly the same as the Oriya maharī (Prakrit meharī[4]) meaning a 'songstress', 'dancing girl', 'devadāsi' or 'harlot', and that this evidence strengthens the suggestion that Karpūraśrī like her mother was a dancing girl.[5] The most important fact in the record that is relevant to our discussion is the mention of Karpūraśrī as hailing from

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1. E.I. XXXIII, 1959-1960, p. 267, ll. 42-43.
2. Ibid., p. 272.
3. Ibid.; also see Ind. Ant. XI, 1881, p. 103 and ibid., XI, 1882, p. 125.
4. H.D.T. Seth, Pāia-sadda-mahannvo (Prakrit-Hindi Dictionary), Varanasi, 1963, p. 698.
5. E.I. XXXIII, 1959-1960, p. 272.

Saloṇapura mahāvihāra (saloṇapura-mahāvihāra-vinirgatā).[1] In the light of the above mentioned Gaya inscription of the Buddha parinirvāṇa era 1813,[2] which contains definite evidence for the employment of dancing girls in Buddhist monasteries, Sircar[3] argues that the phrase 'saloṇapura-mahāvihāra-vinirgatā' in the Ratnagiri Plates, actually means that Karpūraśrī was attached to the Saloṇapura mhaāvihāra where she served as a dancing girl, before being admitted to the king's harem.[4]

From the above discussion it would have become clear that the employment of dancing girls in Buddhist monasteries had come into vogue in Eastern India at least from the beginning of the eleventh century. There is no definite evidence, however, to ascertain how and why this practice was introduced into the Buddhist monasteries. It is most probable that this was an adaptation of the Hindu devadāsī system, and such borrowings were not infrequent at a time when Buddhism was strongly influenced by Hinduism. On the other hand, the large number of Buddhist images and other objects closely associated with Tantrism, that have come to light at Ratnagiri and Solampur (identified as Saloṇapura mentioned in the

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1. E.I. XXXIII, 1959-1960, p. 267, l. 42.

2. See supra, p.239

3. E.I. XXXIII, 1959-1960, p. 272.

4. The epitaph rāṇī is the only evidence to suggest that Karpūraśrī was a secondary queen of king Karṇa. However, the practice of dancing girls being admitted to kings' harems was not entirely unknown in early medieval India, cf. Rājataraṅgiṇī VII, 857-858 and ibid., IV, 36.

Ratnagiri Plate) shows clearly the Tantric influence on Buddhism in this region.[1] Hence, the development of Tantric practices, particularly the Śakti cult, was no doubt a factor that facilitated the employment of dancing girls in some Buddhist monasteries.

According to a remark made by Abu Zaid al Hasan,[2] a Muslim traveller who visited India in the ninth century A.D., the devadāsīs or the dancing girls prostituted themselves and delivered their earnings to the priests for the use of the temple. Albīrūni[3] mentions that temple dancing girls were a source of income to the state coffers. He adds that the expenses of the army were met out of the income derived from them. These observations of Al Hasan and Albīrūni are most probably applicable to the conditions in western India as they travelled only in that region, and therefore it is difficult to determine whether the prostitution of temple dancing girls was a wide-spread practice in other parts of India as well. However, it may be pointed out that in many occasions dancing girls are referred to in contemporary sources as ganikā[4] or deva-veśyā,[5] terms which are normally used to denote a prostitute.

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1. Cf. Debala Mitra, Buddhist Monuments, Calcutta, 1971, pp. 225-232; and Debala Mitra, 'Ratnagiri', Indo-Asian Culture, IX, no. 2, 1960, pp. 160-176.

2. E. Renaudot, Ancient Accounts of India and China by two Mohammedan Travellers, London, 1773, p. 88.

3. E.C. Sachau, Alberuni's India, London, 1914, Vol. I, p. 116.

4. E.I. XXXIII, 1959-1960, p. 244, l. 2.

5. M.M. Dutt (tr.), Mahānirvāṇatantra, Calcutta, 1900, p. xxvii.

The Paschimbhag Copper Plate speaks of two physicians who served the two groups of maṭhas and each of whom was allotted three pāṭakas of land.[1] It is interesting that theirs was the highest emolument received by any of the employees other than the teachers of the maṭhas. It is difficult to account for the high remuneration paid to the physicians except for the importance of their service to the inmates. The list of employees mentioned in the present record also includes eight barbers (nāpita), twelve florists (mālākāra), ten oil pressers (tailika) and eight washermen (rajaka) each of whom received half a pāṭaka of land.[2] The service of the barbers was presumably required by the priests and others who took part in religious ceremonies since shaving of hair and beard was necessary as a measure to ensure cleanliness. Flowers were a major item needed for day-to-day religious activities and oil was required for cooking and lighting purposes. Hence the service of oil pressers and florists was essential for an uninterrupted supply of oil and flowers.

The record also mentions that sixty-four male labourers and leather-workers (karmmakara-carmakara) were attached to the two groups of eight maṭhas, and they, too, received half a pāṭaka of land allotment each.[3] Besides, each of the twenty-four maid-servants (ceṭikā,

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1. E.I. XXXVII, 1968, p. 304, ll. 46-47.
2. Ibid., p. 303, ll. 38-39 and ll. 44-45.
3. Ibid., l. 40.

probably dancing girls) who belonged to all the nine mathas received three quarters of a pāṭaka.[1] If the maid-servants were not dancing girls, it may be assumed that together with the male-servants, they were employed to carry out menial tasks at the institutions. It is, however, not certain what the exact duties of the leather-workers were. Presumably their service was required for making and repairing drums, and according to the Harṣacarita[2] the leather-workers themselves were drummers.

From Hiuen-Tsang and I-tsing we learn that several types of servants were attached to the Buddhist monasteries. I-tsing[3] refers to cooks and kitchen servants of the Makuṭabandhana monastery near Kusinārā. All the monasteries of this period had to employ cooks and kitchen assistants to prepare food for the inmates. At the Hindu temples, too, they had an important role as the preparation of naivedya was a major activity in connexion with the day-to-day religious functions. When Hiuen-Tsang was at Nālandā he was given monastic servants to wait upon him.[4] I-tsing,[5] too, refers to the practice of assigning monastic servants to the learned and senior monks. Also, according to I-tsing,[6] when there were

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1. E.I. XXXVII, 1968, p. 303, l. 41 and l. 45. For a discussion on the term ceṭikā see supra, p. 238
2. Harṣacarita (tr. by E.B. Cowell and F.W. Thomas), p. 142.
3. Record of Buddhist Religion, p. 38.
4. Life of Hiuen-Tsang, p. 161.
5. Record of Buddhist Religion, p. 64.
6. Ibid., p. 36.

alms-givings at the residences of lay followers, the monastic servants were used to carry the utensils from the monastery to the house of the host. They also brought to the monastery the left-overs after the alms-giving.[1] I-tsing[2] says that certain monasteries employed their servants to cultivate monastic land.

There were two other groups of persons at the monasteries who could perform certain services. I-tsing[3] distinguishes between the two groups and describes their relationship to the monastery: 'The white-robed [laymen] who come to the residence of a priest and read chiefly Buddhist scriptures with the intention that they may one day become tonsured and black-robed [sic], are called children [mānava, as suggested by Takakusu]. Those who want to learn secular literature [sic] only, without having any intention of quitting the world, are called students [brahmacārin, as suggested by Takakusu]. These two groups of persons [though residing in a monastery] have to subsist at their own expense.' Although I-tsing mentions here that the two groups of students had to fend for themselves, when clarifying this rule, he states that though students were not to be fed from the permanent property of the Saṁgha, they would receive food from the monastery, according to their merits after carrying out

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1. Record of Buddhist Religion, p. 47.
2. Ibid., p. 61.
3. Ibid., pp. 105-106.

laborious work.[1] On this point he further writes: 'The food made for ordinary purposes or presented by the giver to be used by the students can be given to them without any wrongdoing.'[2]

Besides the paid employees and the students, the religious establishments could also make use of the slave labour. It has been pointed out elsewhere[3] that at least some dancing girls and certain groups of low-ranking servants attached to religious foundations may have been slaves. The religious institutions were also entitled to obtain free labour from at least certain persons who lived in the villages under their control.[4] Thus it would seem that at least certain religious institutions were in a position to muster a large work-force which provided free labour for their economic and religious activities.

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1. Record of Buddhist Religion, p. 106.
2. Ibid.
3. See supra, p. 96
4. See infra, pp. 260ff.

CHAPTER VI

RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS, ECONOMIC FUNCTIONS AND SOCIETY

The religious institution, as a centre of spiritual activity, always maintained a close contact with society. The institutions were often founded, financed and maintained from lavish donations made by wealthy patrons. Although more valuable benefactions came from the royalty and the rich, patronage came from many strata of society.[1] The result of these munificent endowments was the development of religious institutions into property-owning organizations with manifold economic responsibilities. With the involvement in economic activity the relationship between the religious institution and society also acquired new dimensions resulting in extensive contacts with various institutions and individuals.

It has already been shown that the large majority of religious endowments were in the form of land grants and thus landed property constituted the major source of income for most religious establishments. From the Gupta period onwards, religious institutions in eastern India were endowed with cultivated land as well as uncultivated land with several types of privileges and immunities. By the end of the Gupta period a considerable amount of

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1. See supra, pp.103 ff.

uncultivated land, particularly in Bengal, is reported to have been donated to religious bodies and to individual brāhmaṇas. For instance, some land granted in the Damodarpur Copper Plates[1] was either unsettled (apradā) or fallow (khila) land.[2] The Gunaighar inscription (507 A.D.) describes the five plots of land donated to a Buddhist monastery as water-logged and uncultivated.[3] A clear example of the endowment of uncultivated land during the period under review is found in the grant recorded in the Tippera Copper Plate of Lokanātha (c. 650 A.D.). According to this inscription king Lokanātha granted a forest region (aṭavi-bhūkhaṇḍa) without any natural or artificial boundaries to a temple of Anantanārāyaṇa for bali, caru, sattra and also for the residence of brāhmaṇas.[4] In this instance, the temple, in order to create a permanent source of income for worship and the maintenance of the institution, would have had to bring the forest land under cultivation, as otherwise the forest would not have yielded an adequate income.

The mention of the fact that the land was also to be used for the residence of brāhmaṇas implies that new settlements were expected to be set up there. The

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1. E.I. XV, 1919-1920, p. 136, l. 5 and ibid., p. 139, l. 11.

2. According to the Nāradasmṛti (I. 26) a plot of land that has not been cultivated for three years or more is called khila or fallow land. Aprahata or apradā may be translated as that which has not been touched or given; hence, apradā land means unsettled or virgin land.

3. I.H.Q. VI, 1930, pp. 53-56, ll. 29-30.

4. E.I. XV, 1919-1920, pp. 301 ff., ll. 21-22.

establishment of the temple and the brāhmaṇa settlements would no doubt have attracted other settlers such as cultivators, artisans, etc., whose services the institution and the brāhmaṇas required. Thus by donating uncultivated land the kings apparently expected the religious institutions to take the initiative in opening new areas for settlements and production. This, on the one hand, indicates that religious institutions had developed to the point at which they had the capabilities to assume such responsibilities; and, on the other hand, that the rulers had recognized the importance of the role of the religious institutions in economic organization. The records available from the eighth century A.D. onwards do not mention the transfer of uncultivated land or forest land; this was perhaps due to the fact that most of the cultivable land situated in areas with good communication and other facilities had already been brought under cultivation during the preceding period. Therefore almost all the land grants belonging to this period are those recording the transfer of cultivated land.

In a previous discussion it became clear that the rights of the religious establishments over their land varied according to the nature of the grant; in certain cases the rights were limited merely to the collection of taxes, but in certain other instances the institutions enjoyed some property rights.[1] It has also been discussed how the enjoyment of property rights

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1. See supra, p.154

made it necessary for the religious institutions to assume the responsibility of cultivating the land they held. Sometimes the institutions themselves cultivated such land using the resources at their disposal, and in other cases the land was assigned to tenants who cultivated it on a share-cropping basis.[1]

I-tsing[2] informs us that certain Buddhist monasteries assigned land to tenants who cultivated it on a share-cropping basis; yet it is not known whether the tillers were temporary or permanent tenants. However, according to a remark made by Fa-hsien in the beginning of the fifth century, the kings and the gentry not only endowed the Buddhist monasteries with land, but also assigned to them husbandmen to cultivate the land. Although the exact status of the cultivators who are said to have been thus assigned is not clear, it may be argued that the reference was to the permanent tenants who had already been cultivating the land before the transaction.

The Ashrafpur Plates of Devakhaḍga throw some light on the position of some peasants who cultivated monastic land. Grant no. I speaks of some land 'enjoyed'[3] by a certain Sarvāntara, but cultivated by a certain mahattara Śikhara and others.[4] In the grant no. II mention is made of some land 'enjoyed' by Sulabdha and

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1. See supra, pp. 153, 147-149
2. J. Takakusu, Records of Buddhist Religion, pp. 61-62.
3. For an explanation of this term see supra, pp.
4. M.A.S.B. I, no. 1, 1905, pp. 89-90, ll. 6-8.

others, but cultivated by Durggaṭa and Rājadāsa.[1] The plots of land mentioned in the two grants were actually owned by the king and the crown-prince who 'took it away from the enjoyers'[2] of income, and donated it to some Buddhist monasteries. Although the records indicate that the 'enjoyers' were changed as a consequence of the transfer, there is no mention of a similar change as far as the cultivators are concerned. This was presumably because the peasants who tilled the land under the previous landholders continued to do so even after it became the property of the religious establishments. This shows that some land owned by religious institutions was cultivated by permanent tenants. We have no definite evidence showing that land was assigned to temporary tenants, but, if the terms uparikara and udraṅga that occur in some land grants could be taken to mean permanent and temporary tenants, as has been suggested by some scholars, it also shows that the religious establishments were in control of permanent as well as temporary tenants.

Most land grants recording the donation of whole villages stipulate that the land was granted along with rights over pasture grounds, reservoirs, bushes, thickets, forests, habitable land, barren land, etc.[3] The particular mention of these resources suggests that they were

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1. M.A.S.B. I, no. 1, 1905, pp. 90-91, ll. 6-17.
2. For a detailed discussion on this see supra, pp.147-149
3. See supra, p.118

placed at the disposal of the beneficiaries, and it also raises the question whether the transfer of these rights affected the villagers. The forest land, which was normally situated outside the boundaries of the village, gave the villagers the timber and firewood they required. That the pasture grounds were used in common by the villagers is attested to by a reference by Pāṇini.[1] The Mītākṣarā[2] which may be broadly ascribed to the period under review, enjoins that pasture ground shall be allotted for cattle, according to the desire of the villagers. Regarding the transfer of these rights to the donees in religious grants, R.S. Sharma[3] has pointed out that the villagers were allowed to use pasture grounds, reservoirs, forests, etc., without making any payment to the state, and once the rights over these resources were made over to the religious establishments and to the brāhmaṇas, the villagers could no longer enjoy these advantages free of charge. Therefore, in his opinion, the transfer of these rights to religious beneficiaries 'added to the burden of taxation on the villagers'.

Though it is most probable that the transfer of rights over these resources entitled the donees to receive income from them, it is not certain whether these in fact added to the burden of taxes on villagers, as Sharma has

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1. Pāṇini, I, 2, 73.
2. Mītākṣarā, part IV, chapter II, pp. 20-21.
3. R.S. Sharma, Indian Feudalism, 1965, pp. 115 ff.

suggested. Although Sharma maintains that the villagers could use these advantages without making payments to the state before the villages were donated, the king's rights over at least some of these resources are explicitly mentioned in some early legal works. For instance, Kauṭilya enjoins that the king shall exercise his authority over fishing, ferrying and trading in reservoirs.[1] He also enumerates the king's rights over forest-land and forest produce.[2] As regards the common use of pasture ground it may be pointed out that, although it was known in the days of Pāṇini, there is no positive evidence to suggest that this practice continued into the period under consideration. The statement in the Mītākṣarā that pasture ground should be allotted to the villagers according to their wishes, does not help us to determine whether the villagers could use it without making a payment.

Even if the villagers, in early days, could use pasture land for grazing their cattle without payment, it is possible that, with the extension of taxation over every possible source of income, the kings of our period also brought pasture grounds, which were directly connected with a major form of livelihood, under taxation. In fact, Al-Bīrūnī[3] in the eleventh century A.D., clearly mentions that the Indian villagers who grazed their cattle on common pasture grounds had to pay a tax to the

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1. Arthaśāstra, II, l. 20-24.

2. Ibid., II, 17.

3. E.C. Sachau (ed.), Al-Bīrūnī's India, II, 1910, p. 149.

state. Therefore it is logical to suppose that these resources were mentioned in the grants because the state had already been receiving income from them. Moreover, it is impossible for the king to grant to donees rights which he does not himself possess. It is therefore unlikely that the transfer of these rights to religious establishments should have resulted in the villagers being forced to make additional payments.

A striking feature of some of the land grants is the endowment of villages together with their inhabitants. The majority of grants made by the Bhauma-kara rulers of Orissa, specifically mention several groups of people engaged in particular occupations, with whom the land was donated. These grants often mention that the villages were transferred together with the weavers, milkmen, brewers and other subjects.[1] The Bhatera (Sylhet district) Copper Plate of Govindakeśava, which records the donation of 375 halas of land and 296 houses by the king to Śiva, mentions that in addition to this endowment the king gave away many parijanas and different groups of people to the same deity.[2] The Agni Purāṇa[3] also enjoins that villages, together with peasants should be made over to brāhmaṇas, and temples should be provided with land, slaves, cattle, elephants, horses and the like.

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1. Sa-tantuvāya-gokūṭa-śaundikādi-prakṛtikāḥ, E.I. XXIX, 1951-1952, pp. 210 ff., l. 28; ibid., XXVIII, 1949-1950, pp. 211 ff., l. 17; B. Misra, Orissa Under the Bhauma Kings, 1934, p. 41, l. 24.

2. E.I. XIX, 1927-1928, pp. 277 ff., ll. 19 ff.

3. Agni Purāṇa, 211. 72.

The most important problem relating to these types of endowments is what was actually meant by the transfer of villagers to religious establishments. And it is also necessary to examine the nature of relationship between the villagers and the religious establishments, that came into existence as a result of this type of transfer. These records do not contain any direct evidence that would help determine the precise social status of the people who are said to have been 'given' to religious institutions. On the basis of some literary and inscriptional evidence, Lallanji Gopal concluded that at least in certain parts of India, during the early medieval period, there was a tendency towards the emergence of a form of land tenure which resembled the European manorial system based on feudal serfdom.[1] He points out that, according to a story in the Upamitibhavaprapañcākathā of Siddharṣi, a king named Karmapariṇāma is said to have put the entire population of a city which was his fief (bhukti) into cells and kept them there for a long time until they were rescued by another king.[2] Further, in support of his argument, Gopal cites the case of the donation of a village together with its inhabitants (sa-prativāsī-jana-sametam) to some brāhmaṇas as recorded in the Nirmad Copper Plate[3]

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1. L. Gopal, Economic Life in Northern India, 1965, pp. 18 ff.

2. Ibid., pp. 18-19; and also see P. Peterson (ed.), Upamitibhavaprapañcākathā, Calcutta, 1899, pp. 176-178.

3. C.I.I. III, no. 80, l. 10.

of Samudrasena (seventh century A.D.). Along with this example, Gopal refers to the Assam Plate of Vallabhadeva (1184/5 A.D.),[1] according to which king Vallabhadeva donated seven villages together with their inhabitants to god Śiva for the maintenance of an alms-house.

Gopal rightly distinguishes these people from slaves and says that they have also to be distinguished from serfs, if serfdom is conceived of as a perpetual adherence to soil of an estate owned by a lord. But he then goes on to say that if the performance of services for other persons is taken as the essence of the status of a serf the men of these inscriptions may be described as serfs in a restricted sense. However, as far as the story of king Karmaparipāma is concerned it is noteworthy that Gopal admits that it is the only reference in the entire range of Sanskrit literature, which suggests some form of 'manorial rights'.[2] In this regard it may be pointed out that it is difficult to consider the incident described in this story as representing a normal situation. And, as D.C. Sircar[3] has correctly pointed out, king Karmaparipāma is described in the story as an oppressive ruler, and his tyranny could not in any case be regarded as the normal behaviour of ancient Indian kings.

Regarding the inscriptional evidence cited, Gopal himself admits that these records are completely

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1. E.I. V, 1898-1899, pp. 183 ff., ll. 13 ff.
2. Gopal, op.cit., p. 18.
3. D.C. Sircar, Landlordism and Tenancy, pp. 44-45.

silent about the obligations of the villagers and of the claims of the rulers, hence it is difficult to determine the precise social status of these people.[1] Thus it would seem that any attempt to advance theories on the evidence of these inscriptions could easily result in misconceptions. For example, Gopal cites the Assam Copper Plate of Vallabhadeva, in which the king donated seven villages together with their inhabitants to god Śiva, as evidence to prove that the king had 'some sort of ownership' over the villagers.[2] It is, however, noteworthy that the grant, after referring to the donation of the seven villages along with their inhabitants, states that the king also gave five other persons as assistants (sahāyāḥ), together with their wives and children (putradārā--samanvitāḥ).[3] If the king enjoyed equal rights over all the inhabitants of these villages, there is no need to mention the five families separately. Presumably the assistants were either slaves or had previously been in the service of the king.

As to the transfer of villages together with weavers, milkmen, brewers and other subjects in certain Orissan records, Gopal mentions that the king also claimed 'some sort of ownership over men of certain occupations and crafts, and would often transfer his rights over them'. He also adds that it was not a mere theoretical claim but

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1. Gopal, op.cit., p. 25.
2. Ibid., p. 19.
3. E.I. V, 1898-1899, pp. 183 ff., ll. 13 ff.

was one of practical application.[1] R.S. Sharma[2] is also of the opinion that various craftsmen mentioned in the Orissan land grants, were attached to the soil, and therefore, in case of oppression could not, like others, seek shelter in a different village or reclaim virgin land. Such grants, he considers, reduced the villagers almost to the condition of 'semi-serfs'.

It seems that L. Gopal has failed to take into consideration the significance of the entire phrase transferring the specifically mentioned artisans. The inscriptions mention very clearly that the villages were granted with their inhabitants, including weavers, cowherds and brewers (sa-tantuvāya-gokūṭa-śaundikādi-prakṛtikāḥ).[3] Hence, the grant involved not only the specifically mentioned craftsmen, but the population of the village in its entirety. This may well be compared with the reference to the transfer of all the villagers in other inscriptions, particularly with a similar arrangement in certain Candella records. The expression sa-kāru-karṣaka-vaṇig-vāstavya[4] in some Candella grants may be rendered as that (the land was given) together with the artisans, the peasants, the merchants and the householders, i.e. all the inhabitants of the village.

As there is no positive evidence to support the

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1. Gopal, op.cit., pp. 20-22.
2. R.S. Sharma, Indian Feudalism, 1965, p. 282.
3. See supra, p.254
4. E.I. XXXII, 1957-1958, pp. 121 ff., l. 31.

assumption that the king had any 'manorial rights' or 'some sort of ownership' over the inhabitants of the villages he donated, the most important question is the actual meaning of these expressions that refer to the transfer of villages including the inhabitants. It is quite probable that the king could transfer the service of such persons who held state land on service tenure to religious establishments. And therefore, if the brewers, weavers, cowherds, etc., had performed some service to the state in the past, such services could of course be transferred. As D.C. Sircar[1] has pointed out that in some parts of India there were (and still are) different classes of people such as priests, barbers, washermen, carpenters, etc., who held village land on condition that they should serve the village. Such services could be transferred to the donee without implying that the king had any manorial rights over those who performed the services as they could terminate these whenever they gave up the enjoyment of service land.

Although it is quite possible that the king could transfer the service of those persons who held state land on service tenure, in the case of the Orissan inscriptions (and also in the case of the Candella inscriptions mentioned above) it is important to note that the transfer involved the entire village population. Hence, there is no question of the transfer of only those who were engaged in certain particular occupations. Therefore, it would be

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1. D.C. Sircar, Landlordism and Tenancy, pp. 45-46.

reasonable to argue that, by mentioning that a village was granted together with its entire population, it was meant that the king's rights to obtain taxes and labour from the villagers was also transferred. Presumably, the weavers, cowherds and brewers were particularly mentioned because of the special economic importance of their occupations as sources of income and labour to the state. Thus the special mention of artisans, peasants and the merchants in the Candella inscriptions may also be interpreted in the same manner. It is also important to note that the Orissan grants enumerate almost all the possible sources of income in the donated villages, and it is in this context that the mention of the brewers, weavers, cowherds, etc., has to be understood.

The king's right to free labour was known in India at least from the second century A.D. The Junagadh Inscription[1] of Rudradāman, mentions that the king carried out repair work on a lake without using compulsory labour (viṣṭi). Viṣṭi seems to have become a well-established royal prerogative as it drew the special attention of most of the law-givers of the later periods.[2] These law-givers clearly mention that the king is entitled to free labour from artisans and Śūdras. Although there is no mention of viṣṭi or compulsory labour in the land grants of eastern India, that belong to our period, it is referred

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1. E.I. VIII, 1905-1906, p. 44, ll. 15-16.

2. Arthaśāstra, I, 4. II. 6. passim. Manu, VII. 138. Gautama, II. 1. 31 and 35. Viṣnu, III, 32. Vāsiṣta, XIX, 28.

to in a number of land grants from western India. The Palitana Plate[1] of the Maitraka king Dharasena (571 A.D.), from the Kathiawar district, mentions that the land was granted with utpādyamāna-viṣṭika. The Sanjan Plate[2] of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa king Amoghavarṣa, too, transfers the same royal prerogative. The phrase sotpādyamāna-viṣṭika has been translated by E. Hultzsch[3] as 'with the right to forced labour', but V.V. Mirashi[4] takes it to mean 'forced labour as occasion might arise'. However, there is no difficulty in taking the entire phrase to mean that some form of rights over compulsory labour were transferred to the donees.

The Agni Purāṇa,[5] which can roughly be assigned to the ninth or tenth century,[6] mentions that artisans should work for the king, a day every month, free of charge, and the labourers should work for him without any remuneration as long as they are fed. The Agni Purāṇa is generally believed to have been compiled in Bihar or Bengal.[7] If this can be accepted it is possible to suggest that there existed certain royal rights to free

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1. E.I. XI, 1911-1912, p. 84, l. 29.
2. Ibid., XIII, 1915-1916, p. 250, ll. 66-67.
3. Ibid., XI, 1911-1912, p. 81.
4. C.I.I. IV, p.89.
5. Agni Purāṇa, 223. 33.
6. For a discussion on the date of the Agni Purāṇa see, B. Mishra, Polity in the Agni Purāṇa, Calcutta, 1965, pp. 20-25.
7. For a discussion and different theories see ibid., pp. 25 ff.

labour in eastern India. Perhaps the specification in some land grants from this region that land was donated free from all oppression (parihṛta-sarvva-pīḍāḥ)[1] covered the king's rights over compulsory labour as well. It may also be argued that if compulsory labour had been known in other regions for such a long time, there is no reason to believe that it was not known in eastern India. It is more logical, therefore, to think that the right to compulsory labour is what was meant by the reference to the transfer of villages together with their inhabitants. After the transfer, such compulsory or traditional services were to be carried out for the donees.

The transfer of the right to exact free labour from the villagers would no doubt have improved the economic potential of the religious institutions. Compulsory labour could have been profitably utilized in the cultivation of land and other productive purposes. We have no evidence to determine in what ways the transfer of this right changed the relationship between the villagers and the religious institutions. Apparently this must have resulted in forming a new relationship between the two parties, as the villagers now had to serve the religious institution instead of serving the state.

In a previous chapter we have seen that the religious establishments had to maintain a large labour force, mostly permanent, consisting of various categories of functionaries, for the performance of administrative

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1. See supra, p.118

and religious duties. For this service, these persons received temple or monastic land or a prescribed share of income from the land set apart for that purpose.[1] Moreover, as we have suggested in the same discussion, at least some of the servants of certain establishments were slaves.[2] The employment of paid servants and slaves indicates that the religious institution, apart from being a major property owner, had developed into an organization providing employment for a large number of people. With the right to exact compulsory labour from the villagers the religious institution must have become a major organization with authority to control a large section of the labour force in the area.

Most of the donatory inscriptions stipulate the purpose or purposes for which the endowments were made, and as we have seen elsewhere, these included functions such as the performance of worship, provision for the inmates, the maintenance of lamps and the conservation of the buildings.[3] Some of the records even specify what particular items were to be supplied out of the proceeds of the grant. For instance, the Hindol Plate[4] of Śubhākara stipulates that the endowment was for the provision of sandal paste, flowers, incense and clothing and rice water for some ascetics at a Śaiva

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1. See supra, pp.218, 237
2. See supra, p.246
3. See supra, pp. 96ff.
4. Jour. Bihar Res. Soc. XIV, pt. 1, 1928, pp. 77-80.

temple. The Talcher Plates[1] of Śivakara also make similar specifications, mentioning that the income of the grant should be used for the supply of sandal paste, flowers, incense, lighting and also garments for the mendicants. The monetary endowment in the Puri Mārkāṇḍeśvara temple inscription[2] of the time of Coḍagaṅga (1114/15 A.D.), was meant for the sole purpose of providing 24 karaṅkas of oil a month for a perpetual lamp.

In order to feed the inmates and the needy and to prepare caru and naivedya, Hindu temples would have needed large quantities of rice, butter, ghee and many other food items. Hiuen-Tsang refers to various food items and commodities used by the Buddhist monasteries. He mentions that when he took up residence at the Nālandā monastery, he received every day 120 jambhīra fruits, 20 arecanuts, 20 mutmegs, a tael of camphor and a tael of mahāsāli rice, and in addition to this he was provided with three measures of oil a month and also butter and other articles according to his daily needs.[3] This statement may give a fair idea of the requirements of the resident monks at one of the most affluent monasteries at the time. Also according to Hiuen-Tsang, the Nālandā monastery received hundreds of piculs of rice and several hundred catties of butter every day from the

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1. B. Misra, Orissa Under the Bhauma Kings, 1934, p. 51. 11.

2. E.I. XXXIII, 1959-1960, p. 185, 11. 1-7.

3. S. Beal, Life of Hiuen-Tsang, p. 109.

tenants of the monastic villages.[1] Apart from the need to provide for the maintenance of daily worship, construction and repair work was a major responsibility of the religious establishments. And they had considerable funds reserved for this purpose. The necessity to carry out repairs to buildings at least once a year,[2] and the construction of new buildings would undoubtedly have created a demand for various building materials.

Thus it is apparent that as a result of the manifold functions it performed, the religious institution of this period had also become a major consumer whose requirements covered a wide range of commodities. Not all such items came directly in the form of donations. In most cases donations were in the form of land grants and monetary endowments, and it was the duty of the administration of the establishment to make use of the income accruing from the endowments to provide for the requirements.

Certain commodities such as rice, milk, butter, flowers, etc., could have been obtained directly from the land owned by the institutions, but it is very unlikely that all the religious institutions owned villages that supplied all the commodities they needed. For instance, the large quantities of cloth that were needed for religious rituals and also for making garments for the inmates may not always have been produced in their

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1. S. Beal, Life of Hiuen-Tsang, pp. 112-113.

2. See supra, p.236

villages. In such circumstances, the institutions would have had to purchase those commodities they needed from other villages or in the open market. With the expansion of religious rituals, festivals and such other activities, and also the increase in the number of inmates, as it was the case in most Buddhist monasteries, the demand for consumer goods would also have increased. Thus the religious institution which had large funds at its disposal, was a constant source of demand for the commodities produced in the surrounding area. In other words, the religious institution was a reliable market for village produce.

From this discussion it may have become clear that as a result of the extensive property which it accumulated and the manifold economic activities it carried out, the religious institution eventually developed into a major centre for the concentration of wealth and also one of the important institutions through which the general economy was organized. This gave it a strong economic basis suitable not only for religious purposes but also for carrying out certain social activities.

It is well known that from the early days of the Buddhist monastic order much emphasis was given, particularly in the training of novices, to the teacher-pupil relationship. And when the Buddhist monasteries were established, teaching became one of the most significant functions they performed. The Hindu system of education which was originally carried out by individual teachers, too, underwent an important change with the

development of the monastic orders associated with the temple. With the beginning of monastic life in association with the Hindu temple, the educational activities also began to concentrate around it, thereby giving rise to organized educational institutions.

Above all, the most remarkable development of the educational activities of the religious institutions of the period under consideration was the growth of some establishments into full-fledged educational centres with thousands of students. Though we hear of several Buddhist monasteries which were great centres of education, there is no such information about similar Hindu establishments. Yet, some south Indian records testify to the existence of relatively large mathas, though they cannot be compared in their scale of activities with the major Buddhist centres of northern India.

A fairly detailed description of the internal organization and the system of education at the major Buddhist centres in eastern India is available from the records of Hiuen-Tsang and I-tsing. Those institutions such as Nālandā, Vikaramaśīla and Uddaṇḍapura received special attention of the Chinese travellers. As centres of high learning they attracted students not only from all corners of India but from various foreign countries as well.[1] Both Hiuen-Tsang and I-tsing mention that there were thousands of student monks at Nālandā mahāvihāra

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1. S. Beal, Life of Hiuen-Tsang, Introduction, pp. xxvii-xxxix.

who were maintained by the institution.[1]

One of the most interesting aspects of a study of the educational activities of the religious institutions appears to be the expansion of the scope of education. From the Paschimbhag Copper Plate[2] of Śrī Candra we learn that arrangements had been made at several maṭhas to teach the Vedas and grammar. But the evidence from the Malkapuram Inscription[3] from Andhra Pradesh shows that Vedas, grammar, literature, history, logic and philosophy were included in the curriculum of the Golaki maṭha which seems to have been a fairly large establishment. Though the scope of education at the maṭhas seems to have been limited to Hindu religious studies and allied subjects, the curriculum of at least the major Buddhist centres of learning covered a wide range of subjects. In addition to the Buddhist scriptures of different schools, adhyātmavidyā which may have included metaphysics, hetuvidyā or logic, śabdavidyā or grammar, cikitsāvidyā or medicine, śilpasthānavidyā which may have included various arts and crafts, the Sāṅkhya system of philosophy and miscellaneous other subjects were taught at Nālandā.[4]

It is significant that the education given at major Buddhist centres like Nālandā was not limited to

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1. S. Beal, Life of Hiuen-Tsang, p. 112; Takakusu, Record of Buddhist Religion, p. 154.

2. E.I. XXXVII, 1968, p. 303, ll. 42-43.

3. Jour. Andhra Hist. Res. Soc. IV, 1929, p. 160, ll. 49-51.

4. T. Watters, On Yuan Chwang's Travels, I, pp. 155 ff.; and Takakusu, Record of Buddhist Religion, p. 169.

Buddhist studies; it also included various secular subjects such as medicine and arts and crafts. The fact that the teaching also included some non-Buddhist religious scriptures and secular branches of learning may suggest that the Buddhist monks were not the only students attached to these institutions. In fact, I-tsing clearly mentions in a general statement, that there were three types of students at Buddhist vihāras, namely the monks, the laymen who intended to enter the order and those who chiefly studied secular subjects.[1]

Both the student monks and the teachers were maintained by the monasteries. Hiuen-Tsang[2] informs us that, as the monks were so abundantly looked after, they did not have to ask for the four requisites, and because of this they were able to devote their whole time to studies. According to I-tsing,[3] monasteries maintained the student monks, but on certain occasions the lay students, too, could receive subsistence out of the common funds. From this it is evident that, because of their firm economic basis, the religious institutions were able to provide for a large number of students and scholars. And the fact that a broadly based educational system, which included different secular branches of learning, existed in these institutions, and that the laymen were also admitted as students signifies that they exerted

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1. J. Takakusu, Record of Buddhist Religion, pp. 105-106.
2. S. Beal, Life of Hiuen-Tsang, pp. 112-113.
3. J. Takakusu, Record of Buddhist Religion, p. 106.

great influence and control over the educational activities of society.

Besides their educational and religious functions, most religious institutions were able to perform certain charitable activities as well. South Indian inscriptions reveal that some Hindu temples maintained public hospitals out of their own funds.[1] Though some records from eastern India make mention of physicians who served religious establishments,[2] there is no positive evidence to suggest that they, too, maintained public hospitals, like their south Indian counterparts. However, some inscriptions from eastern India concern endowments made to religious institutions for the maintenance of sattras or free feeding centres.[3] These free feeding centres or alms-houses were usually attached to religious institutions for the purpose of distributing food to mendicants as well as the poor. It is evident from the fairly large number of endowments that were made for the maintenance of sattras, that it had become an established institution for poor relief. And the free distribution of food among the needy would no doubt have discouraged begging.

Although most endowments to religious institutions were earmarked for specific purposes, it is quite possible that in many cases the income from the grants was more than adequate for the intended religious purposes, and

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1. Jour. Andhra Hist. Res. Soc. IV, 1929, p. 160, 11.
2. Paschimbhag Plate of Śrī Candra, E.I. XXXVII, 1968, p. 304, l. 46.
3. See supra, p.99

thus provided a surplus income to the establishments. This surplus income was sometimes invested in profit-earning pursuits, which no doubt added to their wealth. The surplus income strengthened the economic position of the institutions, thereby making it possible for them to expand their religious and social activities. Evidence from the accounts of Fa-hsien and I-tsing indicate that, as a general practice, the surplus income of the Buddhist monasteries was annually distributed among the resident monks at the end of the monsoon rain-retreat (vassāvāsa).[1] I-tsing, in another passage, quoting some Vinaya rules, explains how the income of the monasteries was to be expended. He says that the valuables left by a deceased monk should be divided into two portions, one of which is spent on copying scriptures and on building or decorating the 'Lion seat' (most probably the preacher's chair). The second portion is distributed among the monks who are present.[2] Although it is not certain whether this was the system followed in the annual distribution of income, it is quite probable that all the surplus income was not distributed among the resident monks, as at least some of the income had to be kept in reserve for future use. Also on the subject of the distribution of income of the Buddhist monasteries, I-tsing remarks that this practice was not universally followed. He says that some monasteries merely hoarded

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1. H.A. Giles, Travels of Fa-hsien, p. 22; J. Takakusu, Record of Buddhist Religion, p. 62.

2. Ibid., p. 192.

all their wealth, having granaries full of rotten corn, treasuries filled with money and other treasures, while all the members of the community suffered from poverty.[1]

No information is available to ascertain whether the Hindu temples, too, had a practice of annual income distribution. However, some Muslim records refer to the fabulous wealth preserved in certain Hindu temples. The Muslim historian Ibn Asir,[2] in his account of Sultan Mahmūd's invasions of India, mentions that the famous Somnāth temple had an incalculable amount of treasures that fell prey to the invader. Al Utbi[3] states that the treasures plundered at Nagarkot, which was a well known centre of pilgrimage, had attained such an amount that 'the backs of camels would not carry nor vessels contain it, nor writers hand record it, nor the imagination of an arithmetician conceive it'. Similar accounts of large treasures collected by the Muslim invaders from the temples are referred to in various Muslim records.[4]

Although these references mostly concern the temples of western and central India, there is little doubt that the eastern Indian temples, too, possessed large amounts of hoarded wealth. In an account of a temple in Kamrud (Kāmarūpa), the Tabaqāt-i-Nāsirī[5]

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1. J. Takakusu, Record of Buddhist Religion, p. 193.
2. H.M. Elliot and J. Dowson, History of India as told by its own Historians, II, 1866, p. 33.
3. Ibid., II, p. 34.
4. Ibid., pp. 44-45.
5. H.G. Raverty (Eng. tr.), Tabaqāt-i-Nāsirī, p. 569.

mentions that the temple had numerous idols made of gold and silver and the weight of one great idol alone was above two or three hundred mans of beaten gold. When the Muslim invasions spread into eastern India, the religious establishments were the targets of the invaders, because these were the places where most of the wealth was concentrated. Thus it becomes clear that the hoarded wealth was one of the reasons for the spoliation, and sometimes the total destruction, of religious establishments.

As a result of the Muslim invasions the major Buddhist monasteries in Bihar and Bengal, such as Vikramaśīla and Uddaṇḍapura vihāra were completely destroyed, and of the great Buddhist centres there only Nālandā was able to continue its activities but at a very limited scale.[1] The Tibetan traveller Dharmasvāmin[2] who came to Nālandā in the first quarter of the thirteenth century A.D., found that, of the numerous monasteries that were within the premises of the mahāvihāra, only two monasteries were in a serviceable condition. He also states that there were only about one hundred students studying at the time. From the chronicles of Pag Sam Jon Zang[3] we learn that Nālandā was later rebuilt by a king of Magadha, but it does not seem to have achieved

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1. G. Roerich (ed. & tr.), Biography of Dharmasvāmin (Chag Lo-tsa-ba Chos-rje dpal), 1959, pp. 91 ff.

2. Ibid., p. 94.

3. Pag-Sam-Jon-Zang, cited in Buddha Prakash, Aspects of Indian History and Civilization, 1965, p. 213.

the grandeur it once had.

Nothing is known about the fate of most of the religious establishments or the effect of the destruction of these institutions on the general economy. As religious institutions played a vital role in the economy of the period, their destruction and the resulting collapse of the administrative organization must certainly have disrupted the economic order in the area, until at least the economic organization was restored under Muslim rule.

CONCLUSION

From this study it may have become clear that the religious establishments in eastern India, by virtue of the munificent donations they received from almost every quarter of society, had developed into organizations with wide economic assets and responsibilities. Throughout the period under review, both the Hindu temples and the Buddhist monasteries were lavishly endowed with various types of property which included land, money, houses, house-sites and livestock. Land constituted the majority of these endowments, and the number of money endowments was relatively small. Apart from these donations there is evidence to suggest that some institutions accumulated property through purchase by using the funds at their disposal. The property of religious bodies was generally deemed inviolable, although there were isolated instances of spoliation.

As agriculture was the mainstay of the economy of the period, landed property was naturally the most important source of income of the religious institutions as well. Land was often granted with various types of immunities and privileges which included all the rights previously enjoyed by the king. Among these, perhaps the most important was the right to receive different taxes and other dues previously payable to the state. However, the rights of the religious establishments over the land they held varied according to the nature of the grant. Not all the donees were able to secure the royal

sanction for religious endowments with all the immunities and privileges. In certain instances the rights of the religious establishments were limited to those of receiving taxes and other dues, but in some other cases the transfer involved some property rights as well. Thus, by virtue of the immunities and privileges they received, the religious institutions were in a very strong position as land owners in comparison with the ordinary landholders.

In certain cases, particularly where the donations involved, the transfer of some property rights, the cultivation of that land became the responsibility of the religious institutions concerned. Some of the land was given over to their employees on service tenure, while some was leased to tenants who cultivated it on a share-cropping basis. Yet, there is evidence to conclude that at least certain religious institutions were directly involved in the cultivation of their land using their own resources.

During the Gupta period and the early part of the period under consideration, religious institutions were endowed with unsettled land, forest land and land that had not been under cultivation for a long time. In such cases, in order to create permanent sources of income, the institutions had to bring that land under cultivation and start production. This process would attract various settlers such as priests, cultivators and artisans to that land. Thus by donating uncultivated land and unsettled land the kings apparently expected the religious foundations to take the initiative in opening

new areas for settlement and production. It is also important to note that, by this time, the religious institutions themselves had developed into such a position that they had the capabilities to assume such responsibilities; and also that the rulers had recognized the significance of the role of the religious institutions in economic organization.

Though the number of monetary endowments made for religious purposes in this period was relatively small, an analysis of the inscriptions highlights a significant aspect of the economic role of religious institutions. The earliest known money endowments for religious purposes were in the form of deposits made with guilds of artisans or similar economic organizations. Yet, very soon the religious institutions themselves began accepting money deposits on the condition of utilizing the interest for religious functions. This new development which became an established practice in the period under review marked a turning point in the process of involvement of the religious institutions in economic functions. When money deposits were made with guilds or similar institutions it was the responsibility of those institutions to invest the money and spend the interest on the prescribed religious purposes. But when the endowments were made directly to the religious institutions, it committed the institutions to engage in profitable pursuits in order to obtain interest from the deposits. The major field in which the funds were invested was most probably, agriculture. It is possible that the religious

bodies in eastern India, like their south Indian counterparts, invested in livestock-breeding as well. Perhaps some Buddhist monasteries used their funds in purchasing mortgages and entering into business contracts.

As a consequence of the growth of property, management became the responsibility of the religious institutions concerned. Apparently, their original administrative set-up, designed to meet the limited requirements of the inmates and the performance of certain religious functions, was not adequate to meet the demands of the new responsibilities involving the management of complex economic affairs and the resulting expansion of internal administrative functions. Thus in the period under review we see an elaborate administrative organization of religious foundations which was the result of a long process of development.

The available evidence on the administrative organization of religious foundations and their management of economic affairs is very scanty. But even from that limited information it becomes apparent that at least some establishments such as the Nālandā mahāvihāra had a sophisticated administrative network designed to meet the requirements of both their internal administration and their proliferating economic responsibilities.

In fact, the evidence on the administrative structure of the Buddhist monasteries is largely limited to that of the Nālandā mahāvihāra. It appears that the administrative organization of this institution was founded on the concept of the decentralization of authority. A committee system based on the elected representation of

the resident-monks seems to have been the main instrument in exercising the authority of the General Assembly of monks, which was the supreme administrative body. The mahāvihāra had a number of regional monasteries under its control; and at least some of those monasteries, too, were administered through a committee system. It is probable that this closely-knit network of regional monasteries was effectively used in the management of the property of the mahāvihāra, situated in distant areas.

In general, the Hindu religious establishments were also administered by committees consisting of priests as well as of laymen. The committee was responsible not only for the internal administration and the organization of religious functions, but also for the management of property belonging to the establishments.

With the involvement in economic activity the relationship between the religious institution and society also assumed new dimensions. The religious institutions, as major land owners, wielded an immense responsibility in the production activity of the area. They not only provided land and employment to a considerable number of people, but also were able to control at least some of the major resources of production.

As a result of the manifold functions which they performed in the religious and social life of the people, the religious institutions also became major consumers whose requirements covered a wide range of commodities. Since the institutions had large funds at their disposal, they maintained a constant demand for the commodities produced

in the area. Hence, the religious institutions provided a reliable market for village produce. Thus the religious institution eventually developed into a major centre for the concentration of wealth and also became one of the important institutions through which the general economy of the region was organized. This, in turn, gave it a strong basis not only for religious functions but for the implementation of social activities as well.

Most religious establishments either maintained distinct but affiliated educational institutions or they fulfilled an educational role themselves. At least some of these foundations were open not only to the clergy but also to the laity. The scope of education was not restricted to religious studies; it also included 'secular' subjects such as medicine and arts and crafts. The fact that a broadly based educational system including different secular branches of learning existed in some of these institutions, and that laymen were admitted as students, signifies that they exerted great influence and control over the educational activities of society.

It appears that almost every major religious foundation maintained free feeding centres for the poor, the visiting mendicants and pilgrims. Thus it was one of the main institutions for poor relief, and this would no doubt have discouraged begging.

The vast resources of the religious foundations were often more than adequate to meet their own requirements and produced a surplus income. Although some institutions took the pains to distribute the surplus

among the inmates, others hoarded their wealth. There is little doubt that this accumulated hoard was one reason that invited the Muslim attacks on religious establishments, sometimes resulting in their total destruction.

APPENDIX

A DETAILED LIST OF DONATORY INSCRIPTIONS

Title of the Inscription	Find Place	Date	Donor	Donee	DONATION Bihar	Bengal	Orissa
1. Nagarjuni Hill Inscription of Anantavarman C.I.I. III, pp. 266-	Nagarjuni Hills Gaya District, Bihar	c. 550 A.D.	King Anantavarman	Goddess Bhavāni	A village (name missing)		
2. Jayarampur Copper Plate of Gopacandra Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy, 1964-1965, p. 48.	Jayarampur Balasore District Orissa	second half of sixth century A.D.	King Gopacandra at the request of mahāsāmanta Acyuta	Buddhist Saṁgha and the deity Avalokiteśvara at Bodhipadraka mahāvihāra		Village of Śveta-vālikā in the Daṇḍa-bhukti maṇḍala	
3. Narasinghapalli Plates of Hastivarman, E.I. XXIII, 1935-1936, pp. 65-66.	Narasinghapalli Ganjam District Orissa	C. 577 A.D.	King Hastivarman at the request of bhogika Buddhamanci	God Nārāyaṇa at the village of Rohaṇa			Six halas of land and two houses at village of Rohaṇa in the Varāha-varttanī

					DONATION		
Title of the Inscription	Find Place	Date	Donor	Donee	Bihar	Bengal	Orissa
4. Santabommali Plates of Indravarman E.I. XXV, 1939-1940, pp. 197-198	Santabommali Chicacole Ganjam District Orissa	c. 585 A.D.	King Indravarman	God Rāmeśvara-bhaṭṭāraka at the village of Dantayavāguru			Two halas of land at the village of Kroṣṭukā-varttanī. Another hala of lan in village of Dantaya-vāguru
5. Copper Plate of Lokavigraha-bhaṭṭāraka E.I. XXVIII, 1949-1950, pp. 331-	Kanas, Puri District Orissa	599/600 A.D.	Royal officers vaiśvāsika, viṣayapati and amśabṛhad-bhogika	The maṭha of Maṇinaga-bhaṭṭāraka.			Village of Ūrddhava-śṛṅga in Uṭiḍa or Muṭiḍa viṣaya in southern Toslī
6. Copper Plate of Bhānudatta E.I. XXVIII, 1949-1950, p. 334.	Kanas, Puri District Orissa	c. 624 A.D.	mahāsāmanta Bhānudatta	The maṭha of Maṇinaga-bhaṭṭāraka			Village of Kumvukīrik-ṣilāka in Uttamāloka viṣaya
7. Muṇḍeśvari Inscription of Udayasena	Muṇḍeśvari temple in Bhabua sub-division Shahabad District Bihar	c. 636 A.D.	kulapati[1] Bhāguḍalaṇa	God Maṇḍaleśvara	Fifty dīnāras		

1. For the explanation of the term ,kulapati, see supra, p. 91

Title of the Inscription	Find Place	Date	Donor	Donee	DONATION Bihar	Bengal	Orissa
8. Ashrafpur Copper Plate of Devakhaḍga, Grant no.I, M.A.S.B. i, no. 6 1905, pp. 89-90	Ashrafpur near Dacca in Bangladesh	second half of seventh century A.D.	King Devakhaḍga	several Buddhist monasteries under sthavira Saṁghamitra (location of vihāras not given)		Nine pāṭakas and ten droṇas of land at Atalyodyānikatarala, Kodāravoraka, Relatalaka, Palaśata, Sivahṛadīkāsogavarga, Srīmetha, Roḷlavāyika and Tīsanādayayadattakaṭaka	
9. Ashrafpur Plates of Devakhaḍga, Grant no. II, M.A.S.B.I, no.6, 1905, pp. 90-91.	Ashrafpur near Dacca Bangladesh	second half of seventh century A.D.	Crown-prince Rājarāja, son of king Devakhaḍga	several Buddhist monasteries under sthavira Saṁghamitra		six pāṭakas and ten droṇas of land situated at Talapāṭaka, Markaṭāsipāṭaka, Navaropya, Paranāṭana, Darapāṭaka, Dvārodaka and Vyāramuggukā	
10. Kailan Copper Plate of Śridhāraṇa Rāta, I.H.Q. XXIII, 1947, pp. 237-241	Kailan, Comilla District Bangladesh	second half of seventh century A.D.	Mahāsandhivigrahika (minister of peace and war) Jayanātha	In the name of the Buddha, location of the vihāra not mentioned		Four and half pāṭakas of land in the village of Rankupottaka	
10a. Tippera Copper plate of Lokanātha E.I. XV, 1919-1920, pp.306-309.	Comilla District Bangladesh	second half of seventh century A.D.	King Lokanātha at request of mahāsāmanta Pradoṣasarman	god Anantanārāyaṇa		Forest region having no distinct boundaries	

Title of the Inscription	Find Place	Date	Donor	Donee	DONATION Bihar	Bengal	Orissa
11. Grant of Śailodbhava Dharmarāja Mānabhīta, E.I. XXIX, 1951-1952, pp.	Bampur, Orissa	second half of seventh century A.D.	Queen Kalyāṇdevī wife of king Mānabhīta	certain ekasāṭa for the maintenance of a religious institution			three timpīras of land in a locality called Suvarṇaralondī in the Thoraṇa viṣaya
12. Mangraon Inscription of the time of Viṣṇu Gupta E.I. XXVI, 1941-1942, p. 246.	Mangraon Bihar	first quarter of the eighth century A.D.	Avimuktajja or Avimuktārya	(Temple of) god Śubhadreśvara at the village of Aṅgāra	Avimuktajja purchased a pala of oil from villagers for daily maintenance of a lamp at the temple. Most probably a money endowment made for this purpose.		
13. Deo-Baranark Inscription of Jīvita Gupta II C.I.I. III, pp. 216-217.	Deo-Baranark, Bihar.	second quarter of the eighth century A.D.	King Jīva Gupta II of Later Gupta Dynasty at request of bhojaka Suryamitra	deity Varuṇavāsin (Sun god)	Village of Vārupikā in Nagara bhukti and village of Kiśoravāṭaka		

Title of the Inscription	Find Place	Date	Donor	Donee	DONATION Bihar	Bengal	Orissa
14. Nālandā Stone Inscription of the time of Yaśovarman E.I. XX, 1929-1930, pp. 43-44.	Nālandā, Bihar	first half of the eighth century A.D.	Mālāda, son of a minister of Yaśovarman	Bālāditya's monastery at Nālandā	An akṣayanīvī,[1] probably a money endowment for the perpetual offering of various food items to the monks.		
15. Katra Grant of Jīva Gupta E.I. XXXV, 1963-1964, pp. 129-130.	Katra, Bihar	second quarter of the eighth century A.D.	King Jīva Gupta	(The temple) of the goddess Cāmuṇḍā-bhaṭṭārikā	Villages of Surabhāraka, Yāmyā and Harigrāmaka		
16. Copper Plate of Bhavadeva of Devaparvata J.A.S.B. Letters, XVII, no. 2, 1951, pp. 91-94.	Comilla District Bangladesh	eighth century A.D.	King Bhavadeva at request of his minister Vibhūtidāsa	a vihārikā (Buddhist monastery) at Veṇḍamati		seven and a half pāṭakas of land at Ekkarakoṭṭa, Mañjikkakoṭṭa and Koḍḍāvāra	

1. For the explanation of this term, see supra, pp. 149-152

Title of the Inscription	Find Place	Date	Donor	Donee	DONATION Bihar	Bengal	Orissa
17. Khalimpur Plate of Dharmapāla E.I. IV, 1896, pp. 247-251	Khalimpur, Malda District West Bengal	c. 811 A.D.	King Dharmapāla at request of mahāsāmantādhipati Nārāyaṇavarman	God Nannanārāyaṇa	Four villages of Karuñcaśvabhara, Maṇḍalī, Gopippalī and Pālitaka	Four villages of Pālitaka, Gopippalī, Karuñcaśvabhara and Madhaśammalī	
18. Nālandā Copper Plate of Devapāla E.I. XVII, 1923-1924, pp. 318-324.	Nālandā, Bihar	c. 860 A.D.	King Devapāla at request of Bālaputradeva, the king of Suvarṇadvīpa	Monastery build by Bālaputra at Nālandā	Villages of Pālāmaka, Nandivānaka, Maṇivāṭaka, Naḍika and Hastigrāma		
19. Bhagalpur Plate of Nārāyaṇapāla Ind. Ant. XV, 1886, pp. 305-307.	Bhagalpur, Bihar	c. 883 A.D.	King Nārāyaṇapāla	(Temple of) god Śiva at Kalasapoṭa	Village of Makuṭikā in Nakṣa viṣaye in Tīrabhukti		
20. Paschimbhag Copper Plate of Śrīcandra E.I. XXXVII, 1968, pp. 301-304.	Paschimbhag, Sylhet District Bangladesh	c. 930 A.D.	King Śrīcandra	(Mathas of) gods Brahma, Jaimani, Vaiśvānara (Agni), Yogeśvara & Mahākāla (9 maṭhas altogether)		Area of land measuring 120 paṭakas to (maṭha of) god Brahma; 280 paṭakas of land to 8 maṭhas of the other 4 deities. Land situated in viṣayas Garāla, Pogara and Candrapura in Śrihaṭṭa maṇḍala	

Title of the Inscription	Find Place	Date	Donor	Donee	DONATION Bihar	Bengal	Orissa
21. Bhaturiya Inscription of Rājyapāla E.I. XXXIII, 1959-1960, pp. 153-154.	Bhaturiya, Rajshahi District Bangladesh	c. 920-952	Yaśodāsa, a mantrīn (minister) of king Rājyapāla	God Vṛṣabhadvaja (Viṣṇu)		Village of Madhūśrava	
22. Hameśvara temple Inscription E.I. XXVIII, 1949-1950, p. 183.	Hameśvara temple Jajpur, Orissa	first half of the tenth century A.D.	Queen Madhavadevī wife of Śubhākara I	(Temple of) God Śiva entitled Mādhaveśvara			A market (hatta) or the income from the market and a tank.
23. Terundia Plate of Śubhākara II E.I. XXVIII, 1949-1950, pp. 215-216.	Terundia, Puri District, Orissa	first half of the tenth century A.D.	King Śubhākara II at request of his queen Nṛṇṇā	Several brāhmaṇas, for maintenance of some maṭhas and maṇḍapas at Taramaṇḍapagrāma			Village of Lavāgaṇḍā in the Sulāntarakubha viṣaya in southern Tosalī
24. Patna Museum Plate of Raṇabhañja E.I. XX, 1929-1930, pp. 101-104.	Orissa, exact find-spot not known	first half of the tenth century A.D.	Mahādevī Vijyā, wife of king Raṇabhañja	God Vijaesara (Vijayeśvara) or the Śiva-liṅga			Village of Vihāravāḍa in Dakṣiṇāpali viṣaya in the Khiñjali maṇḍala

Title of the Inscription	Find Place	Date	Donor	Donee	DONATION Bihar	Bengal	Orissa
25. Hindol Plate of Śubhākara III Jour.Bihar Res. Soc., pt. 1, 1928, pp. 77-80.	Hindol, Orissa	second half of the tenth century A.D.	King Śubhākara at request of Pulindarāja	God Vaidyanātha bhaṭṭāraka at Yuvāgulopāṭaka			Village of Noḍḍilo in Kaṅkavīra viṣaya
26. Talcher Plate of Śivakara (Grant no. I) B. Misra, Orissa Under Bhauma Kings, pp. 42-46.	Talcher, Orissa	second half of the tenth century A.D.	King Śivakara at request of rāṇaka Vinitatuṅga	A Buddhist monastery at Jayāśrama			Village of Kallaṇī in Pūrvarāṣṭra viṣaya in northern Tosalī
27. Talcher Plate of Śivakara (Grant no. II) B. Misra, Orissa Under Bhauma Kings, p. 51.	Talcher, Orissa	second half of the tenth century A.D.	King Śivakara at request of rāṇaka Vinitatuṅga	A Buddhist monastery at Jayāśrama			Village of Suraddhipura in Madhyama-khaṇḍa viṣaya in northern Tosalī
28. Baud Plates of Tribhuvanamahādevī E.I. XXIX, 1951-1952, pp. 216-220 (Grant no. I)	Baud, Orissa	c. 970-1000 A.D.	Tribhuvanamahā-devī, at request of Śaśilekhā, wife of mahāmaṇḍalādhipati Maṅgalakalasa	Deity Umāmaheśvara installed in temple of Nānneśvara			Village of Koṭṭapura in Tamāla-khaṇḍa viṣaya in northern Tosalī

Title of the Inscription	Find Place	Date	Donor	Donee	Bihar	DONATION Bengal	Orissa
29. Baud Plates of Tribhuvanamahādevī E.I. XXIX, 1951-1952, pp. 219-220 (Grant no. II)	Baud, Orissa	c. 970-1000 A.D.	Tribhuvanamahādevī at the request of Śaśilekhā, wife of mahāmaṇḍalādhipati Maṅgalakalasa	Deity Umāmaheśvara installed in temple of Nānneśvara			Plot of lan called Utthukākhaṇ dakṣetra in Dakṣina- khaṇḍa viṣaya in northern Tosalī
30. Inscriptions from the Baripāda Museum (Grant no. I) E.I. XXXIII, 1959-1960, p. 85.	Pedagadi, Mayurbhanj District, Orissa	c. tenth century A.D.	Kumāramahārāja (no other details available)	Goddess Bhīmā (Durgā?)			Possibly two village the names of which appear to b Dūśāki and Ḍāṭia
31. Inscriptions from Baripada Museum E.I. XXXIII, 1959-1960, p. 85 (Grant no. II)	Pedagadi, Mayurbhanj District Orissa	c. tenth century A.D.	Dhruvarāja (no other details available)	Goddess Bhīmā (Durgā?)			Villages Vanagrāma, Araṇapāda and Bhadrāḍihu(
32. Inscriptions from Baripada Museum E.I. XXIII, 1959-1960, p. 86 (Grant no. II)	Pedagadi, Mayurbhanj District Orissa	c. tenth century A.D.	Toḍhabhañja or Śatrubhañja (reading tentative)	Goddess Durgā			Seems to be a grant of 3 localitie the names o which were Tolerṇā, Bhujā and Rai...? in Nemigrāma i Māḍhā viṣay

Title of the Inscription	Find Place	Date	Donor	Donee	DONATION Bihar	Bengal	Orissa
33. Silimpur Stone-Slab Inscription of the time of Jayapāla E.I. XIII, 1915-1916, pp. 290-292.	Silimpur, Rajshahi District Bangladesh	c. tenth century A.D.	A brāhmaṇa named Prahāsa	(Temple of) Amaranātha at Sīyamba		A tank, a garden and a plot of land measuring 7 droṇas in Sirṣapuñja	
34. Mainamati Plates of Laḍahacandra (Grant no. I) Pakistan Archaeology, III, 1966, pp. 45-46.	Mainamati, Comilla District Bangladesh	c. 1006 A.D.	King Laḍahacandra	The deity Laḍahamādhava-bhaṭṭāraka		Five and a half droṇas of land in village of Phullakaḍa, 8 paṭakas 4 3/4 droṇas and 5 yaṣṭhis in Vappasiṁha-voraka, a market, a piece of land in manaḍevagrama, the villages Guptināṭana and Dollavāyikā	
35. Mainamati Plates of Laḍahacandra Pakistan Archaeology, 1966, III, pp. 47-48.	Mainamati, Comilla District Bangladesh	c. 1006 A.D.	King Laḍahacandra	The deity Laḍahamādhava-bhaṭṭāraka		8 paṭakas and 37 1/2 droṇas in village of Sūravoraka	

Title of the Inscription	Find Place	Date	Donor	Donee	DONATION Bihar	Bengal	Orissa
36. Sonepur Plates of Mahābhavagupta II E.I. XXIII, 1935-1936, pp. 250-252.	Sonepur, Bolangir District, Orissa	first quarter of the eleventh century A.D.	Kamalavāhana vaṇik-sthāna (a merchants' guild)	Śrī Keśava-bhaṭṭāraka devakula and Śrī Āditya-bhaṭṭāraka devakula			Village of Goṭṭaikelā in the Luputuvā-khaṇḍa
37. Boddapadu Plates of Vajrahasta III EI XXXIV, 1961-1962, p. 44	Boddapadu, Orissa	1060 A.D.	A vaiśya named Eramya	Deity Jaleśvara at Avareṁga			Village of Avareṁga
38. Bhatera Copper Plate of Govindakeśava E.I. XIX, 1927-1928, pp. 279-283.	Bhatera, Sylhet District, Bangladesh	c. 1049 A.D.	King Govindakeśava	God Śiva at Bhāṭapāda		296 houses & 375 halas of land in different villages in Śrīhaṭṭa maṇḍala	
39. Draksharama Inscription of time of Kulottuṅga I E.I. XXIII, 1933-1934, pp.	Bhīmeśvara Temple Draksharama Ganjam District Orissa	1103 A.D.	Pallavarāja, an officer in the service of king Kulottuṅga I of Cōḷa dynasty	God Brahmeśvara at Ālavi in the Veṅgī maṇḍala			A plot of land measuring 30 khaṇḍikas
40. Silsila Inscription of Vikrama saṁvat 1162, E.I. XXXVI, 1965-1966, pp. 40-41.	Silsila, Shahabad District Bihar	1106 A.D.	Certain Vimūrti (no other details available)	God Śiva (no other details available)	A plot of land (area not mentioned) in village of Amarameṭha in the Kasaramola paṭṭalā		

Title of the Inscription	Find Place	Date	Donor	Donee	DONATION Bihar	Bengal	Orissa
41. Liṅgarāja Temple (Bhubaneswar) Inscription of Coḍagaṅga (Ins. no. 1) Orissa Hist. Res. Jour. I, 1952, no. 2, p. 8.	Liṅgarāja Temple Bhubaneswar, Orissa	1112 A.D.	King Anantavarman Coḍagaṅga	God Kṛttivāsas			Village of Devadharmaśrī
42. Liṅgarāja Temple Inscription of the time of Coḍagaṅga (Inscription No. 2)	Liṅgarāja Temple Bhubaneswar, Orissa	1114 A.D.	Vīrāṇḍi, a resident of Allataḍāgrama	God Kṛttivāsas			Five māḍhas of gold
43. Puri Inscription of the time of Coḍagaṅga, E.I. XXXIII, 1959-1960, pp. 184-185.	Mārkāṇḍeśvara Temple, Puri, Orissa	1114/15 A.D.	Three pūjāhāris named Hari, Vandau and Vāsu	(Temple of) god Mārkāṇḍeśvara			Unspecified amount of money for provision o 200 measure of oil a month to temple
44. Vajrayogini Plate of Sāmalavarman E.I. XXX, 1953-1954, pp. 262-263.	Vajrayogini, Dacca District Bangladesh	first quarter of the eleventh century A.D.	King Sāmalavarman	Deity Prajñāpāramitā-bhaṭṭāraka		Land, most probably a village	

Title of the Inscription	Find Place	Date	Donor	Donee	DONATION Bihar	Bengal	Orissa
45. Mainamati Copper Plate of Govindacandra Pakistan Archaeology, III, 1966, pp. 50-53.	Mainamati, Comilla District Bangladesh	c. 1020-1050 A.D.	King Govindacandra	Deity Naṭeśvara-bhaṭṭāraka		2 pāṭakas of land in village of Sāharaṭalāka in Peranāṭana viṣaya	
46. Inscription from Puri Mārkaṇḍeśvara Temple, Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy, 1957-1958, no. 403.	Mārkaṇḍeśvara Temple, Puri, Orissa	1128 A.D.	Gaṅganārāyaṇa Velāṇḍi alias Coḍagaṅgana	(Temple of) god Mārkāṇḍeśvara			5 māḍas, deposited with the temple
47. Inscription from Puri Mārkaṇḍeśvara Temple (Inscription no. 2) Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy, 1957-1958, no. 404.	Mārkaṇḍeśvara Temple, Puri, Orissa	1136 A.D.	Gaṅganārāyaṇa Velāṇḍi	Temple of God Mārkāṇḍeśvara			5 māḍas for provision o oil to maintain a lamp
48. Alagum Inscription of time of Coḍagaṅga, E.I. XXIX, 1951-1952, pp. 47-48.	Alagum, Puri District, Orissa	1140 A.D.	Kāmāṇḍi, disāpati (disampati), a local official	Maṭha of god Garteśvara			1) A hala o land in village of Alagumma 2) a sum of 105 purāṇas

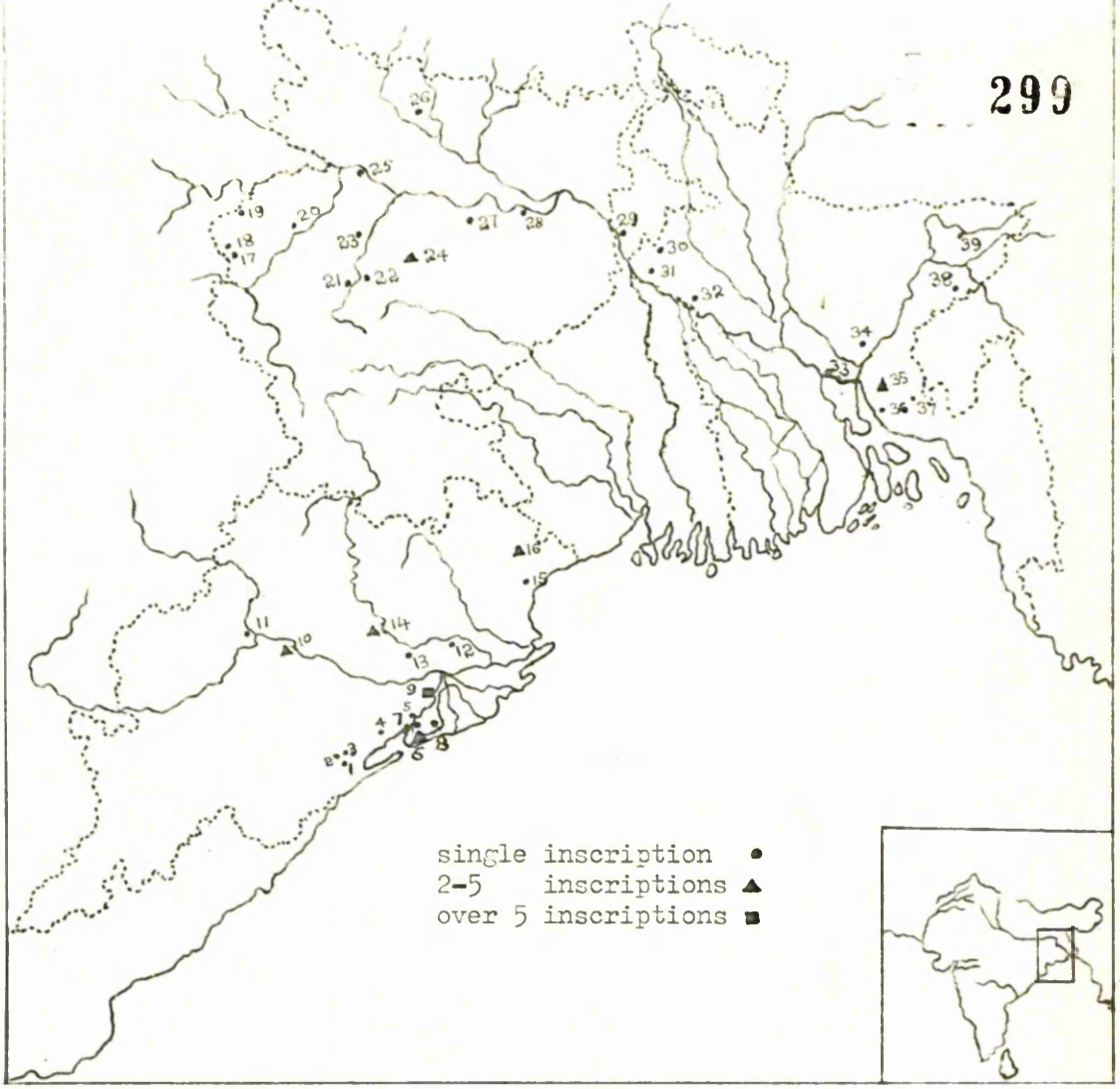
Title of the Inscription	Find Place	Date	Donor	Donee	DONATION Bihar	Bengal	Orissa
49. Deopara Inscription of Vijayasena E.I. I, 1892, pp. 307-311.	Deopara, Rajshahi District Bangladesh	Undated c. 1097-1160 A.D.	King Vijayasena	God Pradyumneśvara		Dug a lake, donated 100 women, a pearl-string, sapphire-string, emeralds, cloths and towns	
50. Nālandā Inscription of Vipulaśrīmitra E.I. XXI, 1931-1932, pp. 98-99.	Nālandā, Bihar	c. twelfth century A.D.	A Buddhist monk named Vipulaśrīmitra	Somapura vihāra (Paharpur)	Excavated a tank and donated a gold ornament (hemābharaṇa) to embellish a Buddha image		
51. Bhubaneswar Inscription of Pramādi E.I. XXX, 1953-1954, p. 94.	Saiva Temple, Bhubaneswar, Orissa	1142 A.D.	Rājan Pramādi, younger brother of king Coḍagaṅga	God Kedāreśvara			The prince deposited 5 gold māḍa with the villagers for maintenance of a lamp at the temple of go Kṛttivāsas (Śiva)

Title of the Inscription	Find Place	Date	Donor	Donee	DONATION Bihar	Bengal	Orissa
52. Khilor Inscription of the time of Coḍagaṅga E.I. XXXV, 1963-1964, p. 117.	Khilor, Puri District, Orissa	1153 A.D.	A certain Paḍālu Kāṭama	God Kellauḍeśvara			A plot of land called Pokhatalā (location not mentioned)
53. Arma Inscription of the time of Madanapāla E.I. XXXVI, 1965-1966, pp. 43-44.	Arma, Monghyr District, Bihar	1157 A.D.	Sārtadevikā, wife of mahāmaṇḍalika Yakṣapala	Dhavala-saṃgha (no other details given, probably a Buddhist monastery)	Village of Khaṇḍapāṭa-kagrama		
54. Liṅgarāja Temple Inscription of the time of Rāghava (Ins. no. 1) Orissa Hist. Res. Jour. V, 1957, p. 180.	Liṅgarāja Temple, Bhubaneswar, Orissa	1162 A.D.	A certain Ācanapradhāni, son of Divākara	God Kṛttivāsas			A plot of land in the village of Dograma in Uttarakhaṇḍ of Ja (Ka) lamvora viṣaya
55. Liṅgarāja Temple Inscription of the time of Rāghava (Ins. no. 2)	Liṅgarāja Temple Bhubaneswar, Orissa	1162 A.D.	A certain Meḍamadevī	God Kṛttivāsas			The village of Devadhara

Title of the Inscription	Find Place	Date	Donor	Donee	DONATION Bihar	Bengal	Orissa
56. An Inscription from Puri Mārkaṇḍeśvara Temple (Ins. no. 3) Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy, 1957-1958, no. 407.	Mārkaṇḍeśvara Temple, Puri, Orissa	c. 1156-1170 A.D.	Not known	God Mārkaṇḍeśvara			A sum of 3 cowrees (kavaḍi-paṇa) for maintenance of 12 lamps at the temple
57. Liṅgarāja Temple Inscription of the time of Rāghava II E.I. XXXV, 1963-1964, p. 119.	Liṅgarāja Temple, Bhubaneswar, Orissa	1172 A.D.	Bālakacchoṭika, a śaivācarya	God Kṛttivāsas			A sum of 5 gold maḍas for the maintenance of a lamp
58. Mera Viṣṇu Temple Inscription of Haridravarman Jour. Bihar Res. Soc. LII, 1966, pp. 63-65.	Mera, Jehanabad Sub-division, Gaya District, Bihar	1175 A.D.	Haridravarman, a brāhmaṇa and his mother Subhaṭā	God Viṣṇu	Excavated a tank near temple, ornaments, seats, beds, etc., along with cows and a field (kṣetra) named Vasudharā		
59. Gaya Inscription dated Vikrama samvat 1232 E.I. XXXV, 1963-1964, pp. 237-238.	Near Viṣṇupāda Temple, Gaya,	1175 A.D.	Vidyādhara, a brāhmaṇa and a guggulin[1]	A maṭha of Gadādhara at Gayā	A sum of 50 karṣāpaṇas was deposited with the maṭha, for feeding brāhmaṇas		

1. For the explanation of this term, see supra, p.222

Title of the Inscription	Find Place	Date	Donor	Donee	DONATION Bihar	Bengal	Orissa
60. An Inscription of the time of Aniyaṅkabhīma from the Anantavāsudeva Temple in Bhubaneswar, E.I. VI, 1900-1901, pp. 200-202.	Anantavāsudeva Temple, Bhubaneswar, Orissa	c. 1200 A.D.	Svapneśvara, brother-in-law of king Rājarāja; an army commander	Temple of god Megheśvara			Laid out a garden, excavated a tank and donated some women (mṛgākṣayaḥ)
61. Eulogy of Bhaṭṭabhavadeva E.I. VI, 1900-1901, pp. 205-207.	Anantavāsudeva Temple, Bhubaneswar, Orissa	c. 1200 A.D.	A brāhmaṇa named Bhaṭṭabhavadeva Bālavalabhi-bhujaṅga	God Harimada (Viṣṇu)			Laid out a garden, excavated a tank and donated some women



MAP INDICATING FINDSPOTS OF THE INSCRIPTIONS MENTIONED IN THE APPENDIX

1. Boddapadu
2. Narasinghapalli
3. Santabommali
4. Banpur
5. Kanas
6. Puri
7. Khilor
8. Alagum
9. Bhubaneswar
10. Baud
11. Sonepur
12. Jajpur
13. Hindol
14. Talcher
15. Jayarampur
16. Pedagadi
17. Silsila
18. Mundesvari Hill
19. Mangraon
20. Deo-Baranark
21. Gaya
22. Nagarjuni Hill
23. Mera
24. Nalanda
25. Patna
26. Katra
27. Arma
28. Bhagalpur
29. Khalimpur
30. Deopara
31. Silimpur
32. Bhaturiya
33. Vajrayogini
34. Ashrafpur
35. Mainamati
36. Kailan
37. Comilla
38. Paschimbhag
39. Bhatera

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(g - god, k - king, q - queen, v - village)